

Skin

This Weird Pimple-Popping Tool Is Blowing Up Online



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Pimple-popping videos have been huge online lately, with millions of people watching doctors squeeze goo out of a bevy of zits. Now there's a new video making the rounds on Facebook that's captivating pimple-popping fans — and it features an unusual-looking tool.

In the video, someone uses what looks like a pair of curved scissors crossed with tweezers to gently squeeze and pull pus out of a person's skin. "Odd-fully satisfying," the caption reads — and it is. The tool used in the video is identified in the caption as a pair of blackhead tweezers, and there are more videos online of people using them.

Blackhead tweezers aren't just for doctors: They're \$10 on Amazon, and they've gotten great reviews from people. "It emptied out a blackhead we have been trying to get rid off for at least five years," one person wrote. "Loved! I had to follow a tutorial on how to use them, but they really do work!" wrote another.

While doctors typically recommend that you don't try to pop zits yourself, New York City dermatologist Doris Day, MD, author of *100 Questions and Answers About Acne*, tells Yahoo Beauty that blackhead tweezers aren't the worst things you could use. "If you're going to go after blackheads, I'd rather you use this device because you're not poking *into* the skin, you're poking *on* the skin," she says. Day notes that a pair of blackhead tweezers are "safer" than other methods because the part that contacts the skin is blunt — unlike, say, a person's fingernails — and is a less traumatic way to get rid of a blackhead.

But Joshua Zeichner, MD, a New York City-based dermatologist, tells Yahoo Beauty that these tweezers are a "fad treatment" online, and he has some concerns about the average person using them. "While they can be effective in the right hands, they have potential for significant harm to the skin in the wrong hands," he says. "Traditional blackhead extractors apply gentle pressure around the circumference of the pore. This tool literally pulls out the blockage out of the pore as you would remove a hair." If a person accidentally tweezes the skin instead of the blockage, it can cause trauma, inflammation, and potentially even scarring to the skin, he says.

(Instead of using blackhead tweezers at home, Zeichner recommends trying a pore strip that attaches to the blackhead and pulls it out as the strip is removed.)

Gary Goldenberg, MD, medical director of the dermatology faculty practice at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, tells Yahoo Beauty that he also has concerns about scarring if a person tries to remove a blackhead that is inflamed or deep. While there are many tools that dermatologists use to extract pimples, many typically use round pressure comedone extractors to remove whiteheads and blackheads, he says. These put pressure around the whole zit, which keeps some of the pus from going deeper or around the lesion, preventing inflammation and potential for scarring.

Of course, prevention is everything, which is why Day recommends using a salicylic acid wash if you routinely suffer from blackheads. However, she admits, “it’s more fun to get blackheads and clean them out.” If you have a pimple-popping habit and decide to use a tool like blackhead tweezers, Day recommends washing your face afterward.