

systematic antibiotics used to treat acne ([Eichenfield, Krakowski, Piggott, et al, 2013](#)). They are relatively free of side effects, with the exception of occasional gastrointestinal upset, photosensitivity, or vaginal candidiasis.

Adolescent girls with mild to moderate acne may respond to topical treatment and the addition of an **oral contraceptive pill (OCP)**. OCPs reduce the endogenous androgen production and decrease the bioavailability of the woman's circulating androgens. Combination OCPs containing levonorgestrel, norethindrone, norgestimate, drospirenone, or dienogest decrease acne in women ([Arowojolu, Gallo, Lopez, et al, 2012](#)).

**Isotretinoin, 13-cis-retinoic acid (Accutane)**, is a potent and effective oral agent that is reserved for severe cystic acne that has not responded to other treatments. Isotretinoin is the only agent available that affects factors involved in the development of acne. However, treatment with isotretinoin should be managed *only* by a dermatologist. Adolescents with multiple, active, deep dermal or subcutaneous cystic and nodular acne lesions are treated for 20 weeks. Multiple side effects can occur, including dry skin and mucous membranes, nasal irritation, dry eyes, decreased night vision, photosensitivity, arthralgia, headaches, mood changes, aggressive or violent behaviors, depression, and suicidal ideation. Adolescents taking this drug should be monitored for depression and suicidal ideation ([Misery, 2011](#)). The drug should be given only at the recommended doses for no longer than the recommended duration. The most significant side effects of this drug are the teratogenic effects. Isotretinoin is absolutely contraindicated in pregnant women. Sexually active young women must use an effective contraceptive method during treatment and for 1 month after treatment. Patients receiving isotretinoin should also be monitored for elevated cholesterol and triglyceride levels. Significant elevation may require discontinuation of the medication.

A 5% dapsone gel has recently been approved for the treatment of inflammatory acne lesions and is reported to be effective when used in combination with a topical retinoid, such as adapalene or tazarotene ([Eichenfield, Krakowski, Piggott, et al, 2013](#)).

## **Nursing Care Management**

Because acne is so common and its appearance may seem so mild,