**Category: Self care**

**Acne and Male Self Esteem**

There are boys that are born with a clear face while others have to work towards achieving one. Yet, many of the discussions around acne are often focused on girls, leaving boys to suffer silently over the effects of acne, on their general image and self-esteem. In fact, teenage boys who have acne are at risk of being bullied with names such as spotty, pizza face, cheetah face, or dirty mentioned at their expense.

**Acne in boys vs girls**

Each teenage boy has a unique genetic makeup that informs his physical changes during adolescence. Combined with their high levels of testosterone, acne in teenage boys could vary from mild, average or severe and present itself on the face, chest, neck, back, shoulders, arms, and even the buttocks. Acne can also present itself as whiteheads, blackheads, pimples, or pustules and its distribution and visibility will differ from one teen boy to another.

**Causes**

Acne is a normal part of growth. Some say it is due to hormonal imbalances in the body especially during a teen’s growth spurt. For some it is a combination of hormonal imbalances and clogged pores. The pores on your skin contain sebaceous glands that excrete sebum. Sebum is the oil that makes your skin smooth and supple. These glands can become overactive in teenagers and too much of sebum, together with the dead skin that we are constantly shedding, can clog the pores and cause acne.

**Treatment**

The good news is that teenage acne is common and treatable. The most important step is to seek the advice of a dermatologist or a certified beauty specialist. Their expertise on skin care will help you navigate through this trying time and get your confidence back. In the meantime, however;

* Ignore the myths; Lies such as ‘your acne is as a result of you being dirty’ are wild and should not bother you. Dwelling on the myths can lead to harmful behavior such as self- loathing and self-harm.
* Stand up against the bullies. Make them know their ignorance about acne is not appreciated. If they do not respond favorably, escalate the matter to a teacher, parent, or guardian.
* Adopt gentle skincare methods. Too much scrubbing, pimple popping, poor washing techniques or using harsh products on your skin will make your acne worse. Use a soft cloth and gentle soaps instead, to gently massage your face.
* Stick to the medication or skin care tips recommended by your dermatologist. In case of negative results, notify discontinue use and notify him or her immediately.
* Do not randomly buy or borrow anti-acne products. What works for your friend may be harmful to you
* Be patient; Acne is a phase like any other and with the right care, your acne will disappear with little notice.

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