

Chapter 8

Troubleshooting

Miscellaneous

Client allergic to benzoyl peroxide

- Put benzoyl peroxide the size of a quarter on inside of arm for 3 days in a row. See if there is a reaction. If no reaction, they are not allergic (many people think they are when they are not). Have them start even more slowly in getting used to it if necessary
- Use the Vitamin A Corrective serum for noninflamed acne
- Use oxygen emulsion in place of Acne Med (benzoyl peroxide) - refer to handout of resources for this.

Client used retinoids prior to coming to see you

- When they make the appointment with you, they will be told to stop use of their current retinoid for at least two weeks. Have them cleanse, tone and moisturize prior to coming to you.
- Test the serums on them – most of the time their skin will be more sensitive than usual but not always.
- If they are sensitive just go more slowly, even with serums. If they are sensitive to all serums, don't start them with one. The Acne Med (benzoyl peroxide) will make their skin less sensitive over time. You could start timing the Acne Med with just five minutes the first night and add five minutes more each night. Retest the serums later.

Impatient Client - wants to be clear in two weeks

- Remind your client that it takes three months, in most cases, to see significant clearing of their skin.
- It takes 30 to 90 days for a microcomedone to surface and that acne will come up in the three months you are treating them.
- If they are inflamed AND are willing to be incredibly dry, sometimes you can push the clearing of their skin to six weeks.

Dryness and peeling

Tell them from the outset that they will most likely have temporary dryness and peeling on their way to getting clear. I say that any product that is strong enough to get acne under control is inherently drying. So, tell them to please be patient with a bit of dry skin, but if it gets uncomfortably dry to please contact you.

- **Use petroleum jelly** - A very common symptom of using benzoyl peroxide is dryness around the mouth and chin area. When that happens, tell them to put a thin layer of petroleum jelly on the dry area before they put the Acne Med on. They will do this for just a few days and then resume the Acne Med there again. Reassure your client that Vaseline will not break them out.

- **Tell them they can use Clearderma (or Cranberry Cream)** in the morning (if not using Acne Med) and/or **Hydrabalance (or Hydrating Emulsion)** at night after the serum and before the Acne Med.

Inconsistent or Improper Product Usage

If a client is not getting clear or staying clear, the first thing to check is check *how* they are doing their home care:

- Make sure they are putting their serum on with their hands, not a cotton ball or cotton round
- Make sure they are putting Acne Med all over their face and not just spot treating
- Make sure they are putting products on in the right order
- Make sure they are putting enough product on

If that checks out, the next step is to check their product purchase history. 90% of the time the clients are using their home care products inconsistently. Check their Acne Med purchases first, and exfoliating serum purchases next. Compare their purchase history to the Normal Product Usage Timetable.

Product	Usage – 1x per day	Usage – 2x per day
1 oz Acne Med *dime to nickel-size	4 -6 weeks	2-3 weeks
1 oz Mandelic Serums *3 pumps	18 weeks	9 weeks
1 oz Glycolic and Salicylic Serums *2 pumps	20 weeks	10 weeks
1 oz Vitamin A Serum *3 pumps	12 weeks	6 weeks
6 oz Cleanser		8-10 weeks
6 oz Toner		8-10 weeks
2 oz Sunscreen or Moisturizer	12-15 weeks	6-8 weeks

If their purchase history and the Normal Product Usage Timetable show that the client is being inconsistent with the home care product usage, explain why consistency is crucial. Next, find out why the client isn't being consistent. It could be:

1. Skipping home care because of dryness/dehydration/products stinging
2. Skipping home care because of budget
3. Skipping home care because of schedule

1. Skipping Home Care due to Dryness, Dehydration, or Stinging Products

Ideally, the client needs to be able to use their exfoliating serum twice a day and Acne Med once a day, to get clear and stay clear. You will need to find a home care routine that will allow for this.

- a. Ask if any of their products are stinging or burning. If so, change that product. Sometimes it can be a mild non-active (like toner or sunscreen) that is the problem.
- b. Ask if they are skipping products when they get dry. If so, the home care routine is too strong.

- i. Make sure they are using **Clearderma (or Cranberry Cream)** in the morning (if not using Acne Med) and **Hydrabalance (or Hydrating Emulsion)** at night.
- ii. Consider giving them a milder cleanser and/or toner.
- iii. Adjust down active products after non-actives – Acne Med and serums. Also test serums on the skin before giving a new one. If their product is not stinging or burning, they do not need to return the product. They can use it later, when their skin has adjusted and is no longer as dry (even once or twice a week as a booster).
- iv. If the client has inflamed acne, give AO2 cream to use in the morning instead of acne med. AO2 comes in a moisturizing base so it will not exacerbate the dryness.

Remember when the weather gets colder, skin becomes drier and cannot always tolerate the same products.

2. Skipping Home Care due to Budget or Money Issues

If a client is having consistency issues because of cost, we can make the following suggestions:

- a. Always spend the money on products before treatments.
- b. They should check in via email for an updated routine if they will be stretching the time between appointments past 2 weeks.
- c. If they can't afford to come in at all, offer to do virtual appointments via email—have them check in with you every two weeks and send pictures every month.
- d. Make sure they are not using any non-Face Reality products that might contain pore clogging ingredients (cleansers, benzoyl peroxide, sunscreen).
- e. Take the toner out of their routine temporarily as a last resort.

3. Skipping Home Care due to Schedule

If a client is having consistency issues because of their schedule, find out what is getting in the way. Brainstorm with the client to find a way around the issue.

- a. If they absolutely cannot use Acne Med consistently at night, move it to their morning routine. Advise the client to wait 15 minutes after applying the Acne Med to apply sunscreen.
- b. If they are not able to do a multi-step routine in the morning, advise them to just use their actives at night. Remind them it may take longer to get clear without using actives twice a day.

What if you are not sure if they are being consistent?

Give them a home care routine that will make them dry. (You can warn them that this is a test, or choose not to depending on the client.) Ask them to return in 2 or 3 weeks. If they are not dry when they return, they are not being consistent.

Lifestyle Issues

If your client is using their home care products consistently and still are not getting clear, it is time to review lifestyle choices. Even if a client initially was on a safe makeup or safe form of birth control, they may have changed that since they were last asked. Here are some reasons a client may not be clearing if it is not due to inconsistent product usage:

- Do they check in with you to adjust their routine at two-week intervals?
- Did they change their routine on their own without consulting you first?
- Are they using non-Face Reality products?
- Are they using comedogenic makeup?
- Are they using comedogenic hair care?
- Are they taking the supplements recommended by their Acne Specialist?
- Are they using fabric softener or dryer sheets in the washer and/or the dryer?
- Are they consuming dairy/soy products: milk, cheese, and/or yogurt?
- Are they consuming protein shakes or protein bars made from whey or soy that contain iodine?
- Are they consuming sushi, seaweed, iodized salt, spirulina, or chlorella?
- Are they consuming high androgen foods like peanuts, peanut butter, shellfish, or organ meat?
- Are they taking vitamins or supplements that may contain iodides and/or biotin?
- Are they taking any medications or drugs or have any medical condition that they haven't yet disclosed to you?
- Are they smoking marijuana?
- Do they regularly wear hats, helmets, or shoulder pads?
- Are they under more stress than usual and/or getting enough sleep?
- Are they on birth control pills or other form of birth control?
- Are they exposed to any chemicals – coal tars, grease in restaurants or auto mechanic shops, dioxin, or chlorinated chemicals

If not being compliant with lifestyle issues is keeping the client from getting clear or staying clear, give them a copy of the **Getting Clear and Staying Clear** document. Highlight which lifestyle issues need addressing. If inconsistent product usage is also an issue, highlight that on the document as well. Inconsistent clients should also receive a copy of the **Normal Product Usage Timetable** with their purchase history written on it. Write which documents are given in their acne treatment notes. If you have to give them these documents too many times, it may be time to tactfully end your relationship with them.

Handling a Minor that is Not Clearing

1. If you have a minor that is not clearing due to inconsistent product use and/or lifestyle issues, ask what is keeping them from being consistent. Find out if there is an issue you can help them work around.
2. If the parent is not in the room, speak with the parent after the appointment to let them know what the issues are.
 - a. They often believe the minor is being compliant. Inform them about inconsistent product usage or lifestyle issues that are causing problems.
 - b. If the parent is not with the minor for the appointment, send an email letting them know what the issues are.
 - c. If the situation can't be changed, suggest they bring the minor back when they are ready to be consistent.

LED's

If a client has inflamed acne that is not clearing after two months AND they have been compliant with their home care, you can lend them an LED handheld light. It can really help to reduce inflammation. See the handout in the consultation forms for instructions (the client takes home) on how they will use it. This is the way we handle lending out LED lights:

- They can borrow it for 60 days
- They have to sign an invoice. We don't charge them, but if it is not returned in a reasonable amount of time, we charge them for the cost of the light.