

## OTC Product Checklist

**Differin Gel\***

Core OTC treatment for mild to moderate acne.



**Benzoyl Peroxide Gel**

( 2.5% 5% 10% )

Kills acne bacteria. Good for mixed or pustular acne. "Clear up Acne Pimples" 5% and 10%\*



**Benzyl peroxide 10% wash (PanOxyl)**

For use on back and shoulders in the shower. OXY 10 Maximum Strength\*

**Salicylic Acid Wash or Pads**

Neutrogena, Clearasil\*



**Mild Bar Soap**

Dove, Cetaphil, Aveeno, Lever\*

**Gentle Skin Cleansers**

Cetaphil, Aquanil, CeraVe, Purpose\*

**Non-Comedogenic Moisturizers**

Prevent skin irritation and dryness, manage side effects to treatment. Olay, CeraVe, Neutrogena, Cetaphil\*

**Broad Spectrum Sunscreen**

SPF 30+ w/ Titanium Dioxide or Zinc Oxide for maximal skin protection from sun.

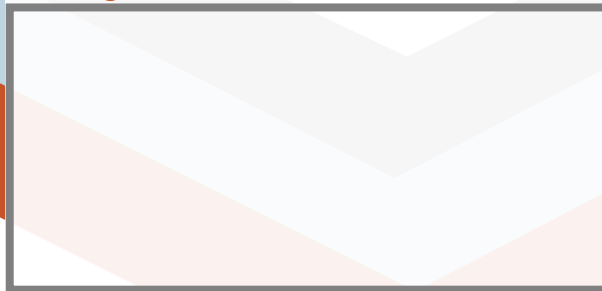
**\*Products Available at the Healthy Heels Shoppe near Campus Health Pharmacy and Student Stores Pharmacy on the 3rd floor of UNC Student Stores**

## Putting it all Together

### Morning:



### Evening/Bedtime:



campus  
HEALTH

campushealth.unc.edu | 919.966.2281  
James A. Taylor Building  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Student Affairs

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to Moderate  
Acne

## Over-the-Counter Treatment

### Topical Retinoid:

**Adapalene 0.1% (Differin gel)** is now available over-the-counter and currently the only prescription strength retinoid product available OTC.

How it works: Topical retinoid products effectively work by breaking down whiteheads, blackheads, increasing skin cell turnover, and reducing inflammation. Apply a pea-sized amount. Results may be noticeable in as little as 2 weeks but **may take 8—12 weeks for full effect.**

### Benzoyl Peroxide:

Available as various formulations (wash, lotion, etc.) of varying strengths (2.5%-10%).

How it works: Antibacterial properties allow it to kill *Propionibacterium Acnes*, a bacteria that contributes to non-comedonal or pustular acne.

Studies suggest that a 2.5% strength product is effective without increasing risk of skin irritation.

For acne on the back, chest, or shoulders, use **PanOxyl 10 % body wash**. Apply in the shower, leave on for 5-10 min before rinsing.

**Caution: Benzoyl Peroxide may bleach or stain clothes and pillowcases.**

### Salicylic acid:

Available in various formulations (wash, lotion, gel, pads, etc.) of varying strengths (0.5%-2%).

How it works: Dissolves the skin debris that clogs pores which can cause acne and also provides mild anti-inflammatory properties.

## Expectations and Precautions

### How long before my acne gets better?

Results may vary. Reduction in acne may be noticed in a week but may take up to 8-12 weeks for maximal reductions in acne. Good habits and adherence will be key to maximizing effects.

### What should I be worried about when using these products?

Side effects include dryness, peeling, redness and irritation. Some products may increase sun sensitivity. Reducing frequency of application, such as using a topical retinoid every other night, or benzoyl peroxide for spot treatment may decrease side effects. Washing with gentle cleansers, using non-comedogenic moisturizers, and using sun protection will minimize side effects and damage to the skin.

### I have tried these products according to instructions for an appropriate amount of time. What if I am not satisfied with the results of treatment?

Talk to your primary care provider or dermatologist. They can prescribe a stronger topical retinoid or may add oral medications such as a short course of antibiotics, spironolactone, or oral contraceptives. Providers or dermatologist may also recommend Isotretinoin (Accutane) for resistant, severe or cystic acne.

### Since I have oily skin, should I really use a moisturizer?

Many products used to treat acne can strip the skin of natural oils causing drying of the skin. Especially when using a retinoid product, moisturizing and using sun protection promotes healthier skin.

## Prescription Treatment

The following treatments require a prescription written by a provider and must be filled at a pharmacy. Always let your provider and pharmacist know about all topical and oral medications (including non-prescription) you are using or taking.

### Topical medications:

Antibiotics (Clindamycin, Erythromycin)  
Retinoids (Retin-A, Tretinoin)  
Benzoyl peroxide

### Oral medications:

Isotretinoin (Accutane)  
Antibiotic (Doxycycline or Minocycline)  
Spironolactone  
Oral Contraceptives

## Sun Protection

A broad spectrum sunscreen protects against damaging UVA and UVB rays of the sun from reaching the dermis, a deeper layer of the skin.

Facial Moisturizers may also include Sunscreen. Look for “SPF” or “Broad Spectrum Sunscreen” on the labels.

Recommended sunscreens contain physical blockers like **Zinc Oxide or Titanium Dioxide** to block UV rays.

Using sunscreen can promote healing of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (PIH).