

THE WORLD'S MOST UNIQUE BEAUTY MAGAZINE

# NEW BEAUTY

THE BIG AWARDS ISSUE!

## BEST OF THE BEST

- anti-aging serums
- lip plumpers
- cellulite creams
- skin brighteners
- body-firming lotions
- mineral makeup
- at-home beauty devices
- wrinkle creams
- hair innovations
- teeth whiteners
- moisturizers
- eye creams
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- cleansers

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## THE PROS

WIDELY USED AND ONE OF THE LONGEST-TESTED ANTI-ACNE INGREDIENTS, BENZOYL PEROXIDE IS A MAINSTAY FOR GETTING CLEAR SKIN.

**01 CLEARS ACNE FAST.** The main advantage of benzoyl peroxide is that it clears blemishes fast by killing acne-causing bacteria. "Initially it was to be used just on affected areas because it would dry up the pimples very quickly," says Dr. Rodan. Over time, new formulations and concentrations have been introduced, and, today, products that contain lower concentrations are thought to be just as effective as those with higher concentrations. "This means you can get the same results without the dryness," she adds.

**02 ACTS AS AN ANTI-INFLAMMATORY AGENT.** According to a study published in *Cosmetic Dermatology*, benzoyl peroxide acts as an anti-inflammatory agent by reducing oxygen in the skin. Because it reduces bacteria in the pore, it is also working to reduce inflammation within the blemish.

# THE AGING

## CONTROL OIL, STOP BREAKOUTS

Acne is instigated to some degree by DHT, a hormonal byproduct that produces excess oil. **Clearogen** works to block DHT from binding to receptors on the sebaceous glands, reducing the number of breakouts. Benzoyl peroxide and salicylic acid are key ingredients in this set and are gradually released to keep irritation to a minimum. \$69, [clearogen.com](http://clearogen.com)

- **PERCENTAGE** 2.5%
- **WHEN TO USE** Once daily
- **WHY IT'S GOOD** This doctor-developed system works on a hormonal level to stop excess oil production.



## THE CONS

DESPITE THE FACT THAT BENZOYL PEROXIDE MAY HELP DIMINISH ACTIVE ACNE, SOME SAY THE POTENTIAL LONG-TERM EFFECTS ARE NOT WORTH THE QUICK RESULTS.

### 01 CAUSES DEHYDRATION AND PREMATURE AGING.

Benzoyl peroxide has been associated with premature aging and dehydrated skin since it causes irritation to occur—anything irritating is usually dehydrating and aging. The dryer the skin looks, the older it appears. “Although the skin may look prematurely aged, we don’t know if the effects are long-term. Once moisturizer is consistently used, the skin bounces back to normal,” says Washington, D.C., dermatologist Tina Alster, MD.

**02 CAN LEAD TO HYPERPIGMENTATION.** Post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (PIH) is characteristic of acne, and benzoyl peroxide does little to help it. “It can create significantly more hyperpigmentation, especially in medium to darker skin because of the irritation that it can cause,” says Venice, CA, celebrity aesthetician Nacole Raphalian.

**03 INDUCES SUN DAMAGE.** Benzoyl peroxide cleans the pore, but some say that, as it does this, it thins the skin and decreases its ability to protect itself from the sun. “Benzoyl peroxide can cancel out the effects of your SPF and make the skin more sensitive to the sun,” says Dr. Luftman. The less protection, the quicker photoaging can set in.

## A NATURAL FORM OF BENZOYL PEROXIDE

New York dermatologist Dennis Gross, MD, recently launched **Trifix Acne Clearing Lotion**, a triple-threat anti-acne formula that combines natural derivatives of the three most effective acne reducers: benzoyl peroxide, sulfur and salicylic acid. \$32, [sephora.com](http://sephora.com)



● **WHEN TO USE** Morning or night

● **WHY IT'S GOOD** The natural alternatives are effective on all types of acne, without the side effects of synthetic ingredients.

## COMMON SIDE EFFECTS OF BENZOYL PEROXIDE

**DRYNESS AND PEELING.** Because benzoyl peroxide acts as a drying agent, it's not uncommon for peeling and irritation to occur. The more sensitive and naturally dry your skin, the more susceptible it is to becoming dry and peeling.

**SKIN THAT FEELS TIGHT.** Benzoyl peroxide can dehydrate the skin, making it feel tight and uncomfortable.

**REDNESS.** Benzoyl peroxide is irritating and therefore causes redness. “It's especially irritating to sensitive skin, and it slows down wound healing,” says Dr. Alster.

# DEBATE

## THE STRONGEST CONCENTRATION

**Glytone 10% Benzoyl Peroxide Acne Gel** helps keep oil levels to a minimum and creates a blemish-free complexion by oxidizing bacteria within the pores. \$18, [glytone-usa.com](http://glytone-usa.com)

- **PERCENTAGE** 10%
- **WHEN TO USE** One to three times a day
- **WHY IT'S GOOD** The lightweight gel texture doesn't leave behind a heavy “I'm breaking out” feeling.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FORMULATION

According to Dr. Rodan, the most important thing with benzoyl peroxide is the formulation of the product, which determines how the medicine is delivered to the target area. “Not all strengths of active ingredients are equally effective. It really comes down to the delivery system [gel, cream or lotion] and the brand's proprietary formulation of the benzoyl peroxide,” she says. While lotions and gels tend to work best, look for products that have scientific data to back up their claims.

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