

Easy Ways to Prevent and Erase Acne Scars

Acne in itself is nothing to be desired, but we think we can all agree that acne scars make the entire process even worse.

Learn how to prevent acne scars from appearing in the first place and what...



There is nothing more irritating than persistent acne scars. To find out where they come from, how to prevent them and how to get rid of them, we talked to Judith Hellman, MD, the Associate Clinical Professor of Dermatology at Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York, NY. With the right skin care routine and the right tips you can avoid acne scars all together.

Q: What causes acne scarring to occur?

JH: Acne scars result from usually cystic, inflammatory acne, which leaves depressed marks when the lesions resolve. Unlike the pimples, scars are there to stay and are the source of psychological distress to many patients not only in their teens or twenties, but even in their forties and fifties and beyond.

Q: How can acne scarring be prevented?

JH: The way to prevent acne scarring is by treating the acne promptly—not picking the skin is most important, and goes a long way toward avoiding scars. Large acne cysts can be treated with injections by a dermatologist. Using the right prescriptions to prevent cysts from forming is important as well.

Q: What can people do who are dealing with acne scars?

JH: Many people confuse scars with dark marks (which are pigmentation). Depressed acne scars can be treated by laser resurfacing and/or injection of filler like Perlane. However, my most successful treatment is done with Fractora, a fractionated radio frequency microneedling treatment, which helps the skin make new collagen and reduce the depth of the scars. This leads to smoother and more even skin.

Q: Do you recommend any products to help with the healing process?

JH: Depressed acne scars don't heal without intervention, so after we treat with Fractora, a short downtime of 2-3 days follows with pinpoint red-brown marks. During this period, a little Aquaphor is sufficient to help the skin heal.

Looking for an at-home remedy? Dr. Hellman recommends the following:

1. Never pick pimples or cysts. The best treatment for scars is not to get them in the first place.
2. Apply toothpaste to cysts. It will help reduce their size quickly.
3. Avoid over-moisturizing oily skin. It will increase acne and the chance of scarring.
4. Using home devices with blue light, such as Silk'n Blue, will control the acne lesions and diminish the chance of scarring.
5. There are dermarollers, which are DIY microneedling devices without the added in-office radio frequency. For those with some pain tolerance, it can help smooth out more superficial scars.