



## Are You Suffering from Rosacea?

### IDENTIFYING & TREATING THIS COMMON SKIN CONDITION

Most of us have experienced facial redness, whether it's from a sunburn, blushing, or an allergic reaction. Redness in the face that lingers, however, could be a sign of a skin condition called rosacea (pronounced ro-ZAY-shah). Rosacea often starts as redness or flushing on the cheeks, nose, chin, and forehead. Sometimes the skin may feel warm to the touch, have a burning sensation, or be itchy.

Over time, many people with rosacea may develop small blood vessels on the skin of their face or red bumps that look like acne. It most often affects women ages 30 to 60 and it's more common among people who have fair skin. In an extreme form, it can thicken the skin on the nose, causing the nose to appear larger or swollen. This is much more common in men. Many people with rosacea also experience dry, irritated, swollen and red eyes.

#### CAUSES & TREATMENT

The causes of rosacea aren't completely understood, but a combination of genetic and environmental factors are thought to play a role. Studies show that rosacea involves issues with the body's immune system. Experts have learned that rosacea is a problem with how the skin senses the outside environment. The immune sensing system in the skin is too sensitive.



Talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.

Rosacea often comes and goes in cycles. Symptoms can flare up and then diminish, only to return later. It's important to pay attention to the things that trigger rosacea. Sunlight, stress, alcohol, spicy foods, and hormonal fluctuations are common triggers.

Some doctors are studying the role of molecules called antimicrobial peptides. These work like natural antibiotics in the skin, killing some bacteria. But they also trigger the body's immune system. Scientists have discovered that some people with rosacea make too many antimicrobial peptides. This discovery could eventually lead to new treatments.

Right now, there are several medications doctors can prescribe to treat rosacea. Some work by affecting the microbes that live on the skin. Others help reduce

redness by constricting blood vessels in the face. Laser therapy may help reduce the redness of enlarged blood vessels, but is not a permanent treatment. It may need to be repeated to maintain the improved appearance it provides for the skin.

If you have symptoms of rosacea, a doctor who treats skin disorders, called a dermatologist, can help.

### COPING WITH ROSACEA

- » To determine triggers, keep a written record of what seems to make your rosacea worse.
- » Use sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) every day.
- » Use a moisturizer on your face if it helps. But avoid products that irritate your skin.
- » Consider trying makeup with a green tone and matte finish to reduce the appearance of skin redness.
- » Rosacea can be distressing as you may feel embarrassed or anxious about your appearance or frustrated by other people's reactions. Talk with your health care provider for support and resources that can help.

