



BEAUTY

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## What Are Blackheads and How to Get Rid of Them

by ALEXANDRA VENISON

For anyone who's suffered from blackheads, you know the confusion. How did they get there? Why are there so many? And, the most important how do you get rid of them?

"Blackheads are essentially oxidized sebum. The sebaceous gland secretes an oil called sebum, which can get clogged up in the pores," begins Rebecca Treston a Dubai based skincare expert. "Once the sebum interacts with oxygen it oxidizes and goes black. This is different from milia, in which a fine layer of skin is intact over the pore, so it looks like a small white head," she adds.

For many, there is an urge to attempt an at-home extraction. "Avoid squeezing blackheads," says Edwige Gandin a beautician at Pastels Salon in Dubai. Treston agrees advising, "I am not a believer in constant extraction of blackheads. Sebum is a naturally occurring substance so once you remove it will re-appear and the blackhead will return. The constant action of squeezing and removing can cause over-stimulation and injury so over time the skin can get damaged and the pores will look more enlarged and pitted."

Instead, it is better to treat blackheads. "Incorporate an exfoliating product into your skincare regime. This step will remove all the dead cell layers and impurities. This cell turnover improves skin appearance and ensures active skincare products will be absorbed much better," says Gandin.



These formulas can be found at your local pharmacy and there are some treatments that you can turn to as well. Treston recommends, "It is better to treat with a q switch such as Fotona Starwalker or a pico laser-like Picogenesis by Cutera. These technologies can eliminate the blackheads and at the same time kill the bacteria responsible for causing acne, which in turn will reduce inflammation and the sebaceous secretions."

In terms of upkeep, Trestons says, "Maintenance is required to keep the pores from blocking up. A toner containing either Beta Hydroxy Acids (BHAs) or Salicylic Acid can then be used. These are the preferred options as they are both oil-soluble and can help regulate the accumulation of the sebum.

For those that are self-isolating and cannot visit a clinic for treatments, a good skincare regimen will help provided it incorporates cleansers and toners that Salicylic Acid/BHAs, powerful antioxidants and non-comedogenic moisturizers. In the evening you can use retinol-based products to keep the skin exfoliated and functioning properly."

Read online: <https://en.vogue.me/beauty/how-to-minimize-blackheads/>

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