



Instructions for use the of Benzoyl Peroxide Products for Acne

Acne treatment often involves the use of topical benzoyl peroxide. This is available in multiple forms including washes, creams, gels, cleansing pads and as a combination found in prescription medications. When applying these medications there are several things to consider in order to minimize adverse effects and optimize effectiveness.

1. All benzoyl peroxide products will cause some degree of dryness and scaling of the skin. Overaggressive washing and dryness may worsen acne, thus these medications are recommended for a once daily use only.
2. Some patients may be allergic to these medications. If you experience any excessive scaling and itching with use of the medication, discontinue its use.
3. Benzoyl peroxide is known to bleach clothing and fabric. Here are some tricks to avoid this unwanted problem. Wash your hands after applying the medication. When using these products at night, plan on wearing an old white T shirt to bed, or use old white pillow cases/sheets to avoid discoloring your linens.
4. Benzoyl peroxide washes need to be left on the skin for 2 minutes prior to washing in order to achieve their maximal effect.

Increasingly these medications are not covered by insurance plans. If the medication is not covered by your insurance plan an over-the counter benzoyl peroxide wash or leave on cream may be purchased. These come in many concentrations from 2 – 10 %. The literature suggests that both 2.5 and 5% benzoyl peroxide products are equally effective in the treatment of acne with lower concentrations being better tolerated.