



R. SCOTT PETERSON, PhD

While adult acne is surely nothing new, the medical community has heightened its attention on the problem, its consequences and management of the condition. Both women and men are affected by acne, and multiple surveys reveal that a majority are bothered by their appearance.

Our society tends to view acne as a “rite of passage” at best or a trial of adolescence at worst. There’s a perception that individuals in their 20s should be “beyond acne,” so when women begin noticing lines and wrinkles while still fretting over comedones, it’s not unusual for them to become frustrated.

At SkinCeuticals, our scientific approach to skin care led to the development of a gentle but effective topical formulation that addresses dual concerns of adult skin: acne and skin aging. Blemish + Age Defense is formulated with calming ingredients to minimize sensitivity, a primary component of acne vulgaris, as well as ingredients to promote epidermal turnover to reduce acne and the signs of aging. Additionally, desquamation helps to reduce the signs of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation that can develop secondary to acne. Research confirms the beneficial effects of the formulation in addressing acne, as well as other parameters of skin appearance, including lines and wrinkles, skin tone, and clarity.

In keeping with our approach to healthy looking skin, this product is suitable as a stand-alone topical intervention but can also be used as part of an integrated skin care regimen. It also fits a niche in our own product offering while complementing other popular products in the SkinCeuticals range. As partners with healthcare providers, our goal continues to be providing high quality, proven formulations that reflect and enhance the care you give your patients. Together, we can enhance patient satisfaction and deliver on the promise of healthy looking skin.

TARGETING ADULT ACNE PATIENT NEEDS: BLEMISH + AGE DEFENSE

WHAT DO YOU SEE IN YOUR PRACTICE IN TERMS OF ADULT ACNE?

Dr. Potozkin: In my practice we see a lot of acne and I’d say it is a 50/50 mix between teenagers and adults. Estimates suggest that about 50 percent of women will suffer from adult acne, and about 25 percent of men will suffer from adult acne. I would say within my practice, probably 90 percent of adults who seek treatment for acne are women.

Adult patients with acne are often frustrated. They’re not teenagers; They’re getting wrinkles and sun spots and they never expected to be getting acne into their adulthood. Patients with severe acne and especially those with cystic acne require systemic medication. A majority of patients, with milder forms of acne, however, can be treated with OTC topicals—and not necessarily prescription medications. Adult patients who inquire about treatment for acne tend to be motivated and will generally be amenable to our skin care recommendations.

Beyond the open and closed comedones that characterize acne, we also recognize that post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (PIH) is a common concern associated with acne. Interestingly, some patients confuse PIH with acne scarring, which it is not. Post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation is very common in Asian, Hispanic, and African-American patients. We don’t know precisely why some individuals develop PIH, but we do know that as the inflammatory processes of acne settle down, there can be extra deposition of melanin, resulting in unwanted skin discoloration.

It is best to prevent PIH in the first place, though. A product like Blemish + Age Defense has been shown in a clinical study to help reduce the appearance of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation.

WHAT IS BLEMISH + AGE DEFENSE? HOW CAN IT BENEFIT ADULTS WHO HAVE ACNE PRONE SKIN?

Dr. Potozkin: Among the ingredients in Blemish + Age Defense is 2% dioic acid, believed to regulate sebum produc-

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tion and inflammatory pathways associated with discoloration of the skin. The formulation also contains the beta hydroxy acids, 1.5% salicylic acid and LHA (a salicylic acid derivative), which can help “unclog” pores by promoting desquamation. Blemish + Age Defense is also formulated with alpha-hydroxy acid, in the form of 3.5% glycolic acid, to help promote exfoliation.

In a trial comparing Blemish + Age Defense to tretinoin 0.025% for the management of adult acne, Blemish + Age Defense produced statistically significantly greater improvements in skin tone evenness, clarity, blemishes/ blotchiness, with a greater reduction in total acne lesion count, compared to tretinoin.¹ When compared to a topical fixed combination gel of clindamycin 1% and benzoyl peroxide 5%, Blemish + Age Defense provided similar efficacy in terms of acne lesion counts and other measured parameters.²

Together, the ingredients in Blemish + Age Defense have been shown to help promote cell turnover to help clear comedones.

HOW DO PATIENTS USE THE PRODUCT?

Dr. Potozkin: Typically, we have patients apply Blemish + Age Defense once or twice a day. Some patients prefer to apply Blemish + Age Defense in the mornings, as it is a light formulation that helps to reduce the feeling of oily skin. They apply this product first. It can be followed by an antioxidant-containing formulation, if desired. All patients are advised to apply sunscreen each morning, and it should be applied last.

For some patients with acne, we also prescribe topical antimicrobials and/or topical retinoids, which can be applied in the evening before bed.

Patients often see notable results within four weeks of starting to use Blemish + Age Defense. We resist setting any timelines on product use. In a clinical study of Blemish + Age Defense, subjects showed significant improvement after 28 days and after 56 days. The open-label single center study enrolled 42 subjects who applied Blemish + Age Defense twice daily for eight weeks. Improvements in PIH grade were observed at Week 4, and a 35% reduction in PIH was reported at Week 8.³

If, after some time, we note that patients have clear skin and appear not to be developing new acne lesions, we may then recommend that they transition to another topical skincare product, perhaps more targeted toward addressing the appearance of aging, such as CE Ferulic.

WHO ARE IDEAL PATIENTS TO USE BLEMISH + AGE DEFENSE?

Dr. Potozkin: I think Blemish + Age Defense is great for someone who has some degree of photoaging, some degree of oiliness, and mild acne. We can use it in combination with prescription medicines for more moderate acne.

I think it really has multiple benefits. For patients—men or women—looking for a cosmeceutical to be used in the morning as part of their overall routine that can help them with acne and post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation, it is a great option.

We've had very positive feedback from our patients. They like it; they like the texture; they like the feel; they like the results. As with other SkinCeuticals products, a lot of research went into the formulation before they brought it to market, and it is formulated in a way that patients really like it a lot. ■

1. Kircik LH, Dahl A, Yatskayer M, Raab S, Oresajo C. Safety and efficacy of two anti-acne/anti-aging treatments in subjects with photodamaged skin and mild to moderate acne vulgaris. *J Drugs Dermatol.* 2012 Jun;11(6):737-40.
2. Baumann LS, Oresajo C, Yatskayer M, Dahl A, Figueras K. Comparison of clindamycin 1% and benzoyl peroxide 5% gel to a novel composition containing salicylic acid, capryloyl salicylic acid, HEPES, glycolic acid, citric acid, and dioic acid in the treatment of acne vulgaris. *J Drugs Dermatol.* 2013 Mar;12(3):266-9.
3. DOF, SkinCeuticals



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BLEMISH + AGE DEFENSE

Blemish + Age Defense is a targeted, oil-free approach for aging skin prone to imperfection and acne. This first-to-market acid complex combines 2% dioic acid with LHA, salicylic acid, glycolic, and citric acids to prevent the formation of acne and clogged pores, while improving the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles, and uneven skin tone.

- Improves the appearance of blotchiness, blemishes, and uneven skin tone
- Decongests clogged pores
- Diminishes visible signs of aging
- Ideal for acne-prone, oily, combination, and aging skin types