

Perioral Dermatitis

Overview:

- Perioral dermatitis is a facial rash. Many dermatologists consider the condition related to acne or rosacea.
- It is most common in people between the ages of 10 and 40, but it may occur at any age. Children and young women are most commonly affected; less common in men.
- It typically occurs around the mouth, eyes and nose.
- The cause is generally unknown, although in some cases the condition may be triggered by the use of steroid creams, steroid asthma inhalers or nasal sprays. It is controversial as to whether toothpaste may trigger some cases.
- It is not contagious.

Diagnosis:

Diagnosis is based on the unique appearance of the rash. There are no blood tests, and biopsies are not usually helpful.

Treatment:

- In general, perioral dermatitis will not resolve without treatment.
- Treatment includes topically applied medications and oral antibiotics. Many cases will not resolve without oral antibiotics. Perioral dermatitis is not thought to represent an infection. It likely improves with oral antibiotics because of anti-inflammatory properties, but since the cause is uncertain, the reason for its response is also uncertain.
- Oral antibiotics (usually doxycycline or minocycline) are typically prescribed for 1–2 months. This is generally the most effective treatment.
- In general, the condition is made worse by use of acne cleaners or scrubs. It is generally preferred to use a gentle cleanser such as Cetaphil.
- In most patients the condition resolves within a month or two and does not return, but in some patients it may recur.