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Annual *Just for Men* Issue

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Men With Red Faces

By Dr. David A.F. Ellis M.D. FRCSC



Having a red face is usually a result of a chronic inherited condition that produces mid facial redness, telangiectasia (tiny superficial blood vessels) on the cheeks, nose, chin, and forehead. Later in life sebaceous gland thickening can

be seen on the nasal tip especially in men. This skin condition called rosacea occurs most commonly in adult life, between the ages of 30 and 60 years. Rosacea is characterized by episodic flushing of affected areas, which may be associated with consumption of alcohol, hot drinks, spicy foods, coffee and tea and UVA + UVB from the sun.

The cause of rosacea is unknown, but it is presumed to be a genetically anomalous vascular response, which produces skin flushing. Rosacea is defined by persistent erythema of the central portion of the face lasting for at least 3 months. Supporting criteria include flushing, papules, pustules, and telangiectasias on the convex surfaces. Secondary characteristics are burning and stinging, edema, plaques, a dry appearance, ocular manifestations, and thickened nasal skin in men. It is more common in northern climates where cold exposure is frequent, and in light-skinned persons in whom flushing is common. This condition is often inherited from one of the parents. Some scientists believe acne rosacea may be due to bacterial or fungal colonization of the skin.

Men's life style with spicy foods, alcohol consumption, and hot beverages may trigger a flushed face in patients with rosacea. Moreover, emotional stress, hot baths, hot and cold weather, heavy exercise and wind can also aggravate the redness. All these are common in men's activities.

Men will often notice a diffuse redness

across the nose, cheeks, chin, and central area of the forehead, and may include the neck and chest. Initially, the increased redness may be episodic, but within months or years it becomes chronic with the eventual development of fine or coarse tiny superficial blood vessels on the skin's surface often called "broken capillaries" especially around the nasal base.

Late in the condition a thickening of the nasal tip or rhinophyma can occur. It is an irregular thickening of the skin of the nose with follicular dilatation (increased pore size) and a purplish-red discoloration that can form pustules in the pores. The cheeks, forehead, chin or ears may also develop tissue thickening. W. C. Fields was known to have this problem.



There are 4 grades to this skin condition

Grade 1

Episodic flushing of facial skin

Grade 2

Permanent presence of dilated vessels

Grade 3

Presences of pustules on the skin's surface

Grade 4

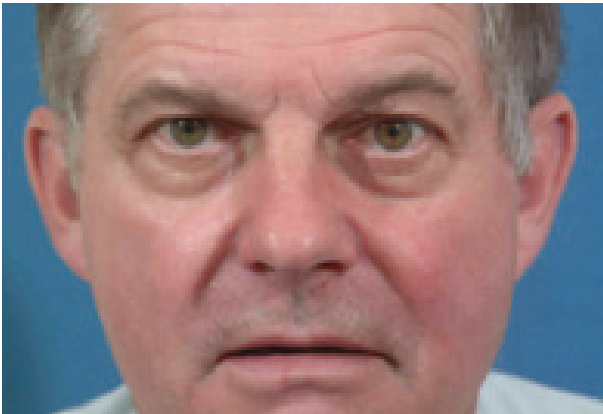
Nasal tip thickness

Treatment

Medical: A successful management regimen provides control rather than eradication of the disease. Prevention is the hallmark treatment, by avoiding those stimuli that tend to exacerbate the disease: exposure to extremes of heat and cold, excessive sunlight, ingestion of hot liquids, tea, coffee, alcohol, and spicy foods. Topical therapy helps to decrease the redness. Metronidazole gel and Noritate 1% cream may be effective topically to substantially reduce inflammatory lesions when there is a

low grade infection. For the deeper infections, the use of oral antibiotics is necessary. However the basic skin care line for people with rosacea or broken capillaries is Rosaclear by Obagi that has been developed for redness. It has a mild effective anti-septic cleanser that decreases the skin's bacteria and fungal colonies that are thought to exacerbate the redness. There is an effect of moisturizing cream that also has anti-septic properties. The Obagi line has a skin balancing sun protection SPF of 30 including zinc oxide 15% and titanium oxide of 2% to help block out the sun. Those that have fun in the sun need to wear moisturizer one hour prior to their sun exposure.

Laser treatments: Once the tiny vessels develop to the extent where a patient wants it reduced, there are several techniques from which to choose: Varilite laser, IPL-limelight, Accu tip 500, and Laser Genesis. The fastest technique to reduce redness is a combination therapy of a modified IPL [Limelight] that decreases the very superficial vessels [broken capillaries] and the flushing that occurs with rosacea. Laser Genesis technology heats up the deeper layers of the skin not only tightening it but causing the deeper vessels to disappear.



Dr. Ellis Right side only treated with Varilite

The remaining vessels can be treated with the Varilite or Accu tip 500 laser that individually removes the vessels. In the post treatment period, the face will be redder for a few hours but makeup can be used. Dr. Ellis himself, has been treated with this laser and lectured to 75 colleagues the next day without the need for any cover-up make up. There must be three or four treatments to significantly soften the redness.

Maintenance treatments must be on-going as more redness and new blood vessels will continue to develop over the years, but the reduction of the redness is significant. Depending on the severity of the acne rosacea, a maintenance program is required to prevent the rapid recurrence of the redness.



Vessels along the nose treated

Rhinophyma

In grade 4 classification of acne rosacea, where the skin of the nasal tip is enlarged and appears ugly, the thickened nasal tip or Rhinophyma is reduced using a hot knife technique and laser resurfacing. Two treatments are performed 4-6 months apart to minimize any complications.



In conclusion, there are specific medical and laser treatments to help make the face less red in both men and women.

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