Spotlight on Rosacea

Rosacea affects 16 million Americans and can cause distress in the daily life of sufferers. The redness may come and go in flares and goes in stages from temporary redness all the way to permanent redness and disfiguring bumps. Lighter skinned individuals are the most affected group.

There are four main signs of rosacea that patients most often have including blushing or flushing that comes and goes, redness that does not go away, bumps or pimples, and visible blood vessels. Other signs may include eye redness, burning sensations, dry skin, thickened skin and raised bumps, swelling, and changes on the body other than the face.

Many people have triggers they can identify with close observation and avoiding those triggers improves their rosacea. Triggers include sun exposure, stress, hot or cold temperatures, wind, exercise, alcohol, spicy food, humidity, skin products such as alcohol, witch hazel, or fragrance, certain medications, and hot drinks. There are many lifestyle changes that can improve rosacea by using gentle cleansers, moisturizers, and sunscreen with at least SPF 15. Using an electric razor can cause less irritation.

Avoiding triggers and treatment by a dermatologist is the best way of keeping the disease under control. Here at the Saint Louis University Department of Dermatology
we are active in the research and treatment for rosacea and if you would like help we are here for you. Options include topical antibiotics, topical anti-inflammatories, or oral antibiotics can be used. Laser treatment, pulsed light therapy, oral medications, and lastly cosmetics are used to conceal remaining redness. For skin thickening often the only treatment is surgical. The eye-involving type of rosacea has its own self-care including baby shampoo on a wet washcloth every morning, antibiotics, and artificial tears. The best treatment would be on avoiding triggers that worsen the lesions or cause them to arise in the first place.

If you have signs of rosacea, contact our office or call center to make an appointment for evaluation.

Saint Louis University Department of Dermatology

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