

Thursday Styles

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Skin Deep

Why Should Kids Have All the Acne?

Hands Off

LIKE a Dyson vacuum cleaner whose clear canister shows the dirt it has sucked up, skin-care treatments that pull oil out of pores offer both instant gratification and a gross-out factor.

But some dermatologists caution patients not to overuse pore strips.

"As soon as pores get dried of their oil, your body automatically sends a message to your sebaceous glands to produce more oil, so it can end up being a vicious cycle," said Dr. Tina S. Alster, a dermatologist in Washington. She advises patients not to use the strips more than once a week.

A spokeswoman for Bioré, which introduced pore strips in 1997, said its strips should be used no more than once every three days.

Now a new machine called Isolaz combines a suction device to clean out pores and intense pulsed light to break up pigmented spots.

"You get instant gratification when you see the little white specks that get sucked out," said Dr. Fredric S. Brandt, a dermatologist in Manhattan and Coral Gables, Fla. Dr. Brandt, who is a paid consultant to Isolaz and received a free device to use in his office, said that treatment requires an initial series of three \$500 sessions. "There's long-term gratification from seeing smaller pores and reduced redness." Heat from the machine's light source may cause sebaceous glands to slow oil buildup, he said.

Dr. Alster, who also received a free Isolaz machine, said that she prefers that her patients use pore strips or the suction device instead of what she called "fingernail surgery."

"They are both less traumatic to your skin than either you or your facialist squeezing your cheeks or the side of your nose," she said.

NATASHA SINGER