

Rosacea

Rosacea is a unique skin condition which can present in a variety of ways across a broad spectrum of the population. When most people think of 'rosacea', they picture the classic appearance of diffuse flushing throughout the central face. However, many will also experience acne-like breakouts, either alone or in combination with flushing. Affected areas are also far from limited to the typical locations of the forehead, nose and cheeks. In fact, the chin, ears, neck, scalp, or even the eyes can be affected (known as *ocular rosacea*).

The underlying cause remains a mystery. The reality is that *rosacea* is likely caused by different things in different people. Known contributing factors include:

- **Genetics**
 - Much more common in those of northern or eastern European ancestry.
- **Foods, drinks or other conditions which encourage flushing, such as...**
 - Heat.
 - Alcohol.
 - Spicy foods.
 - Aggressive or abrasive cleansing.
- **Bacteria**
 - Topical and systemic antibiotics remain the most common treatment for rosacea, though the exact mechanism of action remains uncertain.
 - For some patients, treatment of bacteria within the stomach can significantly improve *rosacea* (though for others it may provide little benefit).
- **Demodex**
 - It's unpleasant to think about, but there is a microscopic mite which naturally lives within the follicles of nearly everyone's skin. For some patients with *rosacea*, treatment of *Demodex* can provide significant improvement.

Treatment of *rosacea* should always first begin with avoidance of known flushing triggers including those mentioned above. All other treatments involve the use of medications or procedures. Since each person's situation is unique, your dermatologist will formulate a treatment plan based on your specific needs.