

## Patient Information Leaflet: Rosacea

### What is Rosacea?

Rosacea is a chronic inflammatory skin condition that primarily affects the face, causing flushing, redness, visible blood vessels, and sometimes acne-like bumps. It commonly occurs in adults, particularly those with fair skin, and can be triggered by various factors, leading to flare-ups.

### Types of Rosacea:

Rosacea can manifest in several forms, including:

1. **Erythematous telangiectatic Rosacea:** Characterised by persistent redness and flushing, with visible blood vessels on the face.
2. **Papulopustular Rosacea:** Involves red, inflamed bumps or pustules that resemble acne but are not the same.
3. **Phymatous Rosacea:** A less common type that leads to thickening of the skin, especially around the nose (rhinophyma).
4. **Ocular Rosacea:** Affects the eyes, causing redness, irritation, and dryness of the eyes and eyelids.

### Causes and Triggers:

The exact cause of rosacea is not fully understood, but several factors may contribute to its development:

- **Genetic Predisposition:** Family history may increase risk.
- **Environmental Factors:** Sun exposure, extreme weather, and humidity can trigger symptoms.
- **Lifestyle Factors:** Alcohol consumption, spicy foods, and hot drinks may exacerbate rosacea.
- **Hormonal Changes:** Fluctuations due to stress, menstrual cycle, or menopause can also play a role.
- **Microbial Factors:** Demodex mites and certain bacteria may contribute to inflammation.

### Symptoms:

Common symptoms of rosacea include:

- Persistent facial redness, especially on the cheeks, nose, chin, and forehead.
- Flushing or blushing easily.
- Visible blood vessels.
- Bumps and pimples resembling acne, which may contain pus.
- Thickening of the skin (particularly in phymatous rosacea).
- Eye irritation or dryness in cases of ocular rosacea.

### Diagnosis:

Rosacea is primarily diagnosed based on a physical examination of the skin and a review of your medical history by a healthcare provider or dermatologist. In some cases, additional tests may be conducted to rule out other skin conditions.



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## Management and Treatment Options:

While there is no cure for rosacea, several treatment options can help manage symptoms:

- 1. Topical Medications:**
  - **Metronidazole Cream or Gel:** An antibiotic that helps reduce redness and inflammation.
  - **Ivermectin Cream:** A topical medication that targets the underlying causes of rosacea and helps clear papules and pustules.
  - **Azelaic Acid:** Reduces inflammation and helps with redness and bumps.
  - **Topical retinoids:** Tretinoin and other topical retinoids can be considered, often in combination with azelaic acid and ivermectin for long term control.
- 2. Oral Medications:**
  - **Antibiotics:** Oral antibiotics such as doxycycline or lymecycline may be prescribed for moderate to severe rosacea, particularly with pustules.
  - **Isotretinoin:** In severe cases, isotretinoin may be considered for treatment resistant to other therapies.
- 3. Laser and Light Therapies:**
  - **Laser Therapy:** Pulsed dye lasers and other types such as diode lasers can help reduce redness and visible blood vessels.
  - **Intense Pulsed Light (IPL):** This treatment targets blood vessels and can improve overall skin appearance.
- 4. Lifestyle Modifications:**
  - **Identify and Avoid Triggers:** Keep a diary to track what factors might trigger or exacerbate symptoms, such as certain foods, drinks, or environmental conditions.
  - **Sun Protection:** Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher daily suitable for “acne” prone skin or marketed as non-comedogenic and wear protective clothing.
  - **Gentle Skin Care:** Use mild, fragrance-free cleansers and moisturisers to avoid irritating the skin.

## Self-Care Tips:

- Practice stress-reducing techniques like yoga, meditation, or exercise.
- Maintain a consistent skincare routine with gentle products.
- Avoid known triggers, such as extreme heat, spicy foods, and excessive alcohol consumption.

## When to Seek Medical Advice:

- If you suspect you have rosacea and are experiencing persistent symptoms.
- If current treatment options do not provide relief or if you experience new or worsening symptoms.

## Conclusion:

Rosacea is a manageable skin condition, and with the right treatment and lifestyle adjustments, most individuals can effectively control their symptoms. Regular follow-up with a healthcare provider can help tailor your treatment plan and address any concerns you may have. If you have any questions or concerns regarding rosacea or its management, please consult your healthcare provider or dermatologist for personalised advice and support.

