

Perioral Dermatitis

Paulger & Wisniewski Dermatology, LLP

For questions or an appointment, call (806)797-1202

Perioral dermatitis is a common skin problem that mostly affects young women. Occasionally men or children are affected. Perioral refers to the area around the mouth, and dermatitis indicates redness of the skin. In addition to redness, there are usually small red bumps or pus bumps, and mild peeling. Sometimes the bumps are the most obvious feature, and the disease can look a lot like acne. The areas most affected are within the borders of the lines from the nose, to the sides of the lips, and the chin.

The Cause: The cause of perioral dermatitis is unknown, but it seems to be a variant or mixture of rosacea and seborrheic dermatitis. Strong corticosteroid creams applied to the face **can cause** perioral dermatitis. Once perioral dermatitis develops, corticosteroid creams seem to help, but the disorder reappears when treatment is stopped. In fact, perioral dermatitis usually comes back even worse than it was before use of steroid creams. Some types of makeup, moisturizers, and dental products may be partially responsible.

Treatment: If not treated, perioral dermatitis may last for months to years. Even if treated, the condition may recur several times, but usually the disorder does not return after successful treatment. Although topical medications seem to help “tone down” the dermatitis – they don’t seem to put it into full remission. It most often takes a 6-8 week course of **oral anti-inflammatory antibiotics** to eradicate the dermatitis. Remember, it is not a “one size fits all world” – if you don’t respond to the treatment – call so we can switch your medications.

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