

Best treatments for acne: Isotretinoin and triple therapy

In a meta-analysis of acne treatments which reviewed studies of 65,601 patients¹, the most effective treatment was oral isotretinoin, followed by triple therapy containing a topic antibiotic, a topical retinoid and benzyl peroxide.

For monotherapies, oral or topical antibiotics, or topical retinoids have comparable efficacy for inflammatory lesions, while oral or topical antibiotics have less effect on noninflammatory lesions.

In NZ the only topical antibiotic available for acne is clindamycin and benzoyl peroxide (trade name Duac). Topical mupirocin and fusidic acid should not be used as topical antibiotics for acne as they are generally reserved for clearing bacterial nasal carriage.

Reference:

1. [Comparative Efficacy of Pharmacological Treatments for Acne Vulgaris: A Network Meta-Analysis of 221 Randomized Controlled Trials](#) Ann Fam Med.(2023)

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