

Blackheads, Pores & Combination Skin

1. How can I reduce my pores and have a smoothed appearance?

Pore size is primarily determined by genes and cannot be changed. With that said, it's certainly possible to minimize their appearance. To understand fully how to do this, it is important to understand the function of pores and why they often appear larger as we age. Acne and blackheads are a result of the follicle becoming blocked, which causes oil, dirt and bacteria to accumulate inside the pore and expand the diameter. Also, as your skin ages, it loses elasticity because of decreased collagen and elastin production, causing a weakened support structure for your pores and allowing more dirt and debris to collect. This loss of elasticity can result in sagging of the skin, making pores appear larger and more noticeable.

To topically treat enlarged pores, look for cleansers that will thoroughly cleanse the skin, to help prevent dirt and debris from clogging pores. Those that contain witch hazel are best, as they will tighten pores, making them less noticeable. Additionally, look for treatments and moisturizers that contain exfoliators like glycolic and salicylic acids to keep pores clear and remove imperfections, retinol to stimulate cell turnover and help boost collagen production as well as antioxidants to defend against skin damaging free radicals. Finally, use products that not only clear out pores but also prevent sebum oxidation, which is the cause of the visible dark spot associated with blackheads. Our Pore Reform line is specifically designed to address blackheads and enlarged pores and contains witch hazel, volcanic mineral clay and other ingredients that collectively minimize pores' enlarged appearance. They will work to help strengthen the pores' natural support structure and effectively reduce blackheads caused by dead skin cells, oil and dirt in the follicles.

In addition to topically treating pores, it's important to remember that food fuels your body and mind, so when you eat poorly, it directly appears on your skin. Try eating foods that are rich in collagen boosting ingredients such as embryonic foods that contain amino acids (I like eggs beans and seeds), antioxidants, which fight off free radicals and inhibit damage to collagen (I like pomegranates) and good fats (I like walnuts and avocado). These foods will help your pores keep their shape by encouraging collagen production. Also, do your best to avoid exposure to sun, pollution, cigarettes and other toxins, as they all contribute to skin damage.

Everybody has pores because we need them! Try not to focus on the things you don't like about yourself and focus on the things you love about yourself. Like I always say, when you learn to be imperfect, your life will be more perfect!

2. What can I do to keep my combination/oily skin balanced?

The key to balancing your skin is through the use of products targeted at combination skin. Because your skin is experiencing symptoms of both oily and dry skin simultaneously, it's important to use treatments that will control oil while still hydrating and balancing moisture levels. Murad's Pore Reform line is specifically formulated to normalize oil production while also preventing moisture loss and maintaining hydration.

3. I have blackhead problem on my nose area, how can I get rid of them?

Blackheads are a very, very common problem – virtually all of my patients have them! Unfortunately, there is no cure-all for blackheads; however, there *are* safe and effective methods of getting rid of them. Regularly scheduled visits with your esthetician is a necessity in preventing any kind of skincare concerns; blackheads, especially. If you still notice blackheads forming and feel that you must get rid of them, always apply a warm towel or washcloth to the effected area before *gently* squeezing them out with the tips of two Q-tips.

My patients' concerns are of the utmost importance to me in my practice and in my company, which is why I developed Pore Reform; a pore-specific product line that targets the prevention of blackheads. The products in the Pore Reform line work to help strengthen the pores' natural support structure and effectively reduce blackheads caused by dead skin cells, oil and dirt in the follicles. By keeping pores clear of clogging free radicals and regulating oil production, Pore Reform balances the health of the skin's surface layer to provide a smooth, refined and even complexion as part of my Inclusive Health philosophy.

4. What can I do to get rid of blackheads forever?

Blackheads can certainly be treated and removed temporarily, but there are no safe or legitimate procedures that will prevent them from returning. Blackheads are often misunderstood and are thought of as dirt clogged in one's pores. This is a myth, blackheads are actually just oxidized oil that is in the pore and virtually everyone has them!

Do your best never pick at your pores or your face. It will only lead to scarring and possibly even more blemishes caused by the transfer of bacteria from your hands to your face.

