

ACNE TREATMENT ALGORITHMS

	Mild Acne Vulgaris	Moderate Acne Vulgaris	Severe Acne Vulgaris	Acne Conglobata	Acne Fulminans	Rosacea	Hidradenitis suppurativa (HS)	Female Acne (suspect PCOS)
Cutaneous Morphology	Scattered open and closed comedones	Open and closed comedones with inflammatory papules and pustules and few nodules	Open and closed comedones but inflammatory papules, pustules and nodules predominate	Foul smelling cysts, interconnecting abscesses, keloid and atrophic scarring	Severely inflammatory and ulcerated nodules	Erythema and telangiectasias with or without inflammatory papules and pustules	Inflammatory nodules with or without sinus tracks and scarring distributed to the axilla, buttocks, inframammary crease and inguinal folds	Inflammatory nodules and papules distributed mostly on the jaw line
Associated Symptoms	None	None	Inflammation, painful lesions	Inflammation, painful lesions, lymphadenopathy	Fever, joint pain, malaise, loss of appetite, weight loss, enlarged liver and spleen, lymphadenopathy	Skin burning, skin flushing, ocular symptoms	Pain at the site	Abnormal menstruation, obesity, hirsutism, oily skin and hair, infertility, inappropriate male features, insulin resistance
Workup	Consider culture and/or biopsy if unsure of diagnosis	Consider culture and/or biopsy if unsure of diagnosis	Consider culture and/or biopsy if unsure of diagnosis	Consider culture and/or biopsy if unsure of diagnosis	CBC, ESR, CRP, X-ray for osteolytic bone lesions	Consider culture and/or biopsy if unsure of diagnosis	Consider cultures	Labs: DHEA, free and total testosterone, total estrogen, progesterone, LH, FSH, Free insulin, HgbA1c, TSH, Free T4, CRP, Sed rate
Oral Medications	None	Oral antibiotics	Oral antibiotics or isotretinoin	Isotretinoin	Isotretinoin, Prednisone	Low dose oral antibiotics for papular rosacea	Oral antibiotics or Adalimumab (Humira) or Isotretinoin	Spironolactone, oral contraceptives
Topical Medications	Benzoyl Peroxide (BPO) with or without topical retinoid	BPO + topical retinoid + topical antibiotic Alternative: Topical dapsone or topical azelaic acid + BPO + retinoid	BPO + topical retinoid + topical antibiotic Alternative: Topical dapsone or topical azelaic acid + BPO + retinoid	Topical retinoid + BPO	Topical retinoid + BPO	Topical metronidazole, topical azelaic acid, topical ivermectin, topical minocycline for papular disease Topical oxymetazoline or topical brimonidine for erythema	BPO, Hibiclens, clindamycin, erythromycin, sulfur wash, sulfacetamide lotion, dapsone gel I/L Triamcinolone injections for acute flares Laser therapy	See topical treatment options for mild, moderate and severe acne vulgaris