

My Face is Turning Red. What Should I Do?



**By Beatriz H. Porras, M.D., Board Certified.
Member of the National Rosacea Society.
Medical Director Skin Diagnostics Laser
and Rejuvenation.
www.cincinnatiaskinlaser.com**

Although Rosacea is now recognized as a common skin disorder which develops gradually, initially patients may be unaware of their condition and thus not seek medical attention, thinking that the redness, flushing and occasional pimples are simply normal flushing, adult acne or just a sunburn. However, early recognition is important because untreated Rosacea can lead to disfigurement and potential visual impairment. Rosacea appears to occur most often in fair-skinned people of northern and eastern European descent.

An estimated 14 million Americans have this disease. It often affects multiple members of the same family. Rosacea can start as rosy or reds cheeks that get accentuated by warm weather, ingestion of spicy food or alcoholic beverages. The disease may ultimately foreshadow and become as severe as permanent facial redness, visible blood vessels or telengectasias, bumps and pimples. In more severe cases, especially in men, the nose becomes enlarged (rhinophyma); this is a disfiguring complication that has to be treated by surgery. Ocular signs appear in advance disease in about 20% of the patients and manifest as dryness, swelling and redness. Rosacea gets worse in the summer due to the elevated temperatures and intense sunlight. Unfortunately without treatment Rosacea tends to become progressively worse and can have a substantial impact on people's emotional, professional and social lives.

The cause of Rosacea is still a mystery. Having said this however, the good news is that although Rosacea cannot be cured, it can be controlled with prescription medications, laser treatments and lifestyle changes. Oral and

topical antibiotics help to control the blushing and breakouts. Metronidazole has been the most extensively studied therapy for Rosacea. In many cases when patients look for professional help, there are irreversible changes that must be treated with laser. An initial evaluation may establish presence of telangectasias which can be treated first with the Cutera 1064 hand piece. I do one or two facial vein removals spaced six to eight weeks apart. In between the vein removal treatments, Genesis can be started. Genesis is another form of laser that acts in the dermis, controlling proliferation of blood vessels, decreasing redness and generating new collagen. Genesis considerably decreases redness, improves skin tone and texture. I usually do series of five to eight treatments spaced two weeks apart. The final step of this comprehensive approach is Intense Pulse Light (IPL). I recommend two to three IPL treatments spaced three weeks apart. IPL will help to even the complexion. Patients should be kept on topical medication as maintenance treatment. If breakouts and pimples are frequent then oral antibiotics in low doses should be considered.

Life style changes are important: staying away from the sun, using sunscreen, staying cool and well hydrated, identifying and avoiding factors that make the disease worse like spicy food, alcoholic beverages, and hot and sunny weather. Need for maintenance laser treatments depends on the appearance of the patient. I evaluate them six months after finishing the treatments. Usually just one or two Genesis treatments per year will help keep the disease under control.

From May to September every year this is the most common condition that I treat in my office. I have hundreds of patients with Rosacea, so you are not alone. When the beautiful sunny and warm weather is here but your face is getting red, you probably have Rosacea. For more information visit the National Rosacea Society at www.rosacea.org.

Skin Diagnostics Laser and Rejuvenation offers Medical and Laser treatments to improve Rosacea, call us for an appointment at 513-631-0059 or visit our website at www.cincinnatiaskinlaser.com.