

Green tea extract helps acne

Back to [Healthy News](#)

SAN FRANCISCO, Mar 24, 2003 (United Press International via COMTEX) -- Long touted for its health-promoting properties, green tea might be an effective treatment for acne, a study suggests.

Green tea has been shown to fight bacteria, reduce inflammation and decrease hormone activity -- three characteristics that make the ancient tea an excellent candidate for an acne therapy.

"This study showed that 3 percent green tea cream is comparable to 4 percent benzoyl peroxide in the treatment of moderate to severe acne," said lead author, Dr. Jennifer Gan-Wong, with the Memorial Medical Center in the Philippines.

Gan-Wong presented her team's findings at the American Academy of Dermatology Annual Meeting. Researchers from tested the promising candidate -- in the form of a 3 percent green tea extract cream -- vs. the leading treatment for acne, 4 percent benzoyl peroxide cream.

A computer randomized a group of 108 subjects into one of two treatment groups. One applied benzoyl peroxide cream twice daily for 12 weeks and the other used green tea extract cream twice daily for the same period. Patients received identical bottles of cream and were unaware of the type of treatment they were assigned. Subjects were examined and photographed each week by dermatologists, who also were unaware which treatment each patient had been given.

The researchers noted the green tea cream seemed to lighten patients' skin color and improve the overall appearance of their complexion.

Green tea therapy might be appealing to consumers because conventional wisdom holds that natural products are less toxic and have fewer side effects than other drug products, the researchers said.

The preliminary data suggest green tea extract cream causes fewer side effects than benzoyl peroxide treatment. Patients in the green tea group reported fewer cases of dry skin, itching and allergic responses.

The findings, while promising, are not yet substantial enough to change clinical practice, Dr. Azucena Arguelles, a private practice dermatologist from Mountain View, Calif., told United Press International.

"My sense is that for this to be out on the market and adopted by the medical community the results will need to be repeated," she said.

The finding could be relevant to the millions of Americans who suffer from acne breakouts, a condition which affects nearly 85 percent of the U.S. population and has a detrimental affect on self-esteem and well-being.