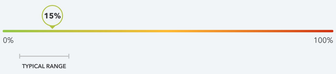
Severe Acne

POWERED BY 23ANDME RESEARCH

Severe acne is a common skin condition that occurs when hair follicles in the skin become clogged with oil, bacteria, and dead skin cells. This can lead to many deep and painful types of pimples along with many whiteheads and blackheads. Severe acne can be persistent and lead to scarring, especially without proper treatment, which usually includes prescription medication.

Jamie, your genetic result is associated with a **typical likelihood** of having severe acne.

An estimated **15%** of females with genetic results like yours have been diagnosed with severe acne **by their 20s**. This is based on data from 23andMe research participants of European descent.



This estimate is based on currently available data and may be updated over time.

Ways to take action

For people with acne, experts agree that healthy lifestyle habits can help reduce the frequency and severity of breakouts.

- Wash the affected areas twice a day and after sweating
- Use gentle skin cleansers
- Avoid aggressive scrubbing of the skin
- Use skin care and cosmetic products that are less likely to clog the pores, including products labeled "oil-free" and "noncomedogenic"
- Avoid touching or picking at areas prone to acne to help prevent complications, including scars and changes in skin color

Learn more from the American Academy of Dermatology Association*

About severe acne

What is severe acne?

Severe acne is a common skin condition that occurs when hair follicles in the skin become clogged with oil, bacteria, and dead skin cells. This can lead to many deep and painful types of pimples along with many whiteheads and blackheads. Severe acne is most common on the face, but can also affect multiple parts of the body – including the neck, back, and chest. Severe acne can be persistent and lead to scarring, especially without proper treatment, which usually includes prescription medication.

What are some complications of severe acne?

People with severe acne may experience the following:

- Scarring: After severe acne heals, scars can form. Enlarged and raised scars, called keloids, are more common in people with darker skin.
- Changes in skin color: Once severe acne clears up, the affected area may be lighter or darker than before, especially in people with darker skin.
- Psychological effects: For some people, severe acne and the associated complications can cause embarrassment, low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression.

For people who have severe acne, lifestyle modifications and other treatments, including medications, can help manage the condition and prevent complications.

Other factors that can impact your chances of having severe acne

While up to 85% of Americans have experienced acne, it is estimated that less than 20% of Americans have experienced moderate to severe acne. Besides genetics, some factors that can increase a person's chances of developing acne include:

- Age: The chances of developing this condition are highest during puberty and then decrease with age.
- Hormone levels: This condition is associated with changes in hormone levels, such as with puberty and the menstrual cycle. In addition, conditions that cause high levels of androgen hormones – including polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) and congenital adrenal hyperplasia – can increase the chances of developing severe acne.
- Family history of severe acne
- Currently taking certain medications

Keep in mind

This report **does not diagnose** severe acne. **Consult with a healthcare professional** if you are concerned about your likelihood of having severe acne or before making any major lifestyle changes.

If you have already been diagnosed with severe acne by a healthcare professional, it is important to **continue any treatment plans** that they prescribe, including medications and lifestyle modifications.

The likelihood of developing severe acne also depends on **other factors**, including age and family history.

This report **does not account for every possible genetic variant** that could affect your likelihood of developing severe acne.

This report is based on a genetic model **created using data from 23andMe research participants**. It has not been clinically validated and should not be used to make medical decisions.

How we got your result

Methods

This report is based on a statistical model that takes into account your genetic results at more than 8,500 genetic markers, along with the ethnicity and sex you reported in your account settings, to estimate the likelihood of having severe acne. We used data from 23andMe research participants to calculate this estimate. Results and estimates may be updated over time as the model or scientific understanding about this condition improves. Note that this report does not include rare genetic variants that have a large impact on the likelihood of having severe acne.

About the result

People whose result is associated with odds of having severe acne that are at least 1.5 times higher than average are considered to have an increased likelihood. Between 18% and 26% of individuals receive an "increased likelihood" result, depending on ethnicity. These results are based on many genetic markers, and random test error at one or more of these markers can lead to a small margin of error in your estimated likelihood of having severe acne. For people whose estimate is near the boundary between typical and increased likelihood, this margin of error may introduce some uncertainty about whether their estimated likelihood is considered "typical" or "increased". Your genetic result is associated with a typical likelihood. Based on the available genetic markers used to calculate your result, there is a less than 1% chance your genetic likelihood estimate could fall on the other side of the boundary and be in the range that is considered increased.

Scientific validity across ethnicities

We verified that the model meets our scientific standards for individuals of European, Hispanic/Latino, East/Southeast Asian, South Asian, Sub-Saharan African/African American, and Northern African/Central & Western Asian descent.

How we may use ethnicity and sex to customize this result

- If you indicated in your account settings that you are of European, Hispanic/Latino, East/Southeast Asian, South Asian, Sub-Saharan African/African American, or Northern African/Central & Western Asian (Middle Eastern) descent, your result is tailored based on data from individuals of that ancestry.
- If you indicated in your account settings that you are predominantly of both Hispanic/Latino and another ancestry, your result will be based on data from individuals of Hispanic/Latino descent.
- If you indicated in your account settings that you are predominantly of both Sub-Saharan African/African American and European descent, your result will be based on data from individuals of Sub-Saharan African/African American descent.
- If there is not enough data from individuals of your ethnicity or combination of ethnicities at this time, your result may be based on data from individuals of European descent because the most data is available for this population.
- Your Severe Acne result also takes into account the birth sex you indicated in your account settings.

See our white paper to learn more about the science behind this report.

Read More:

American Academy of Dermatology Association. "10 tips for clearing acne in skin of color." Retrieved September 10, 2021, from https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/acne/DIY/skin-color.*

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