

HOT & HAPPY! 50 WAYS TO BLAST FAT & FEEL AMAZING

Women's Health

YOUR SEXIEST BODY

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- The Back!
- The Butt!

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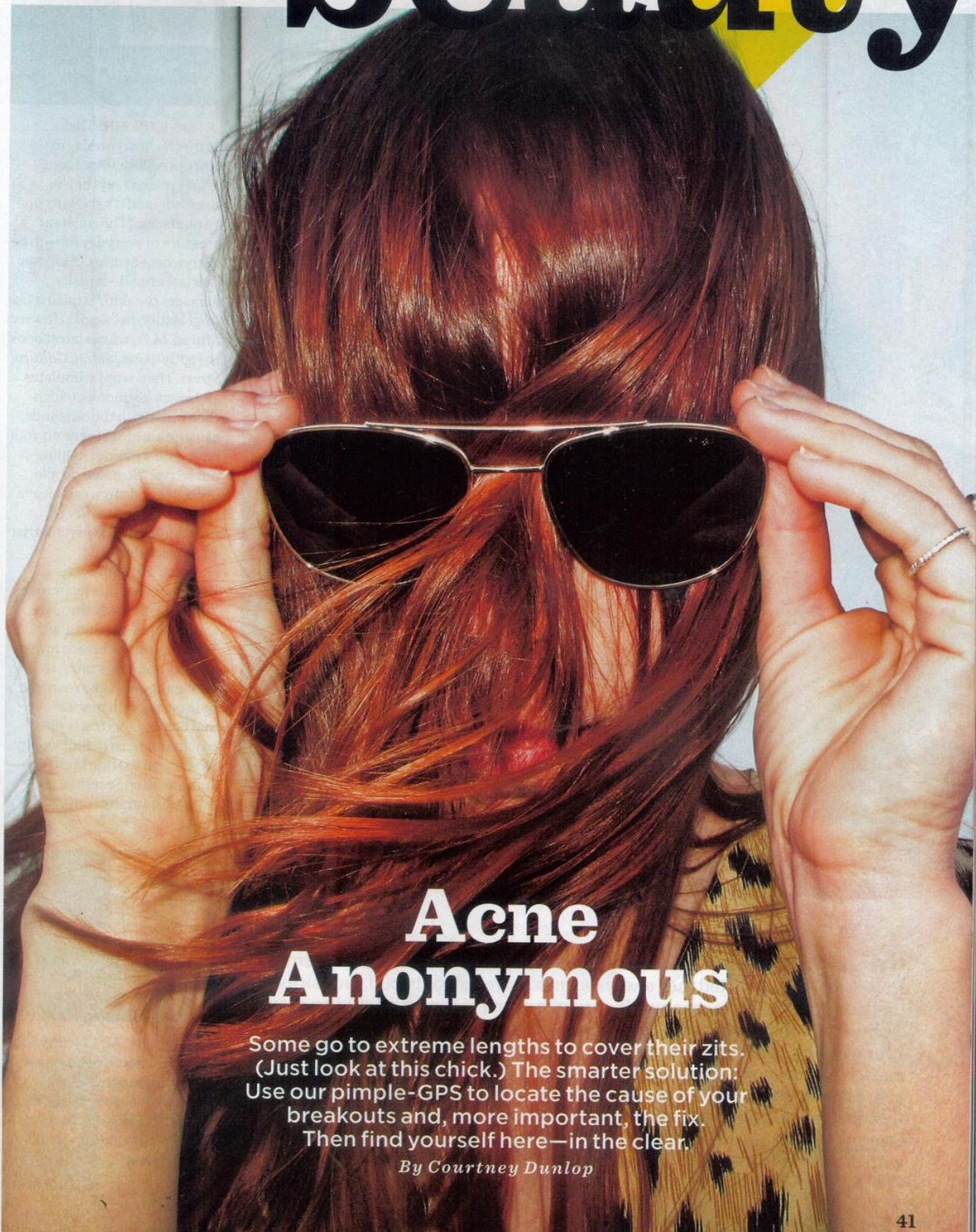
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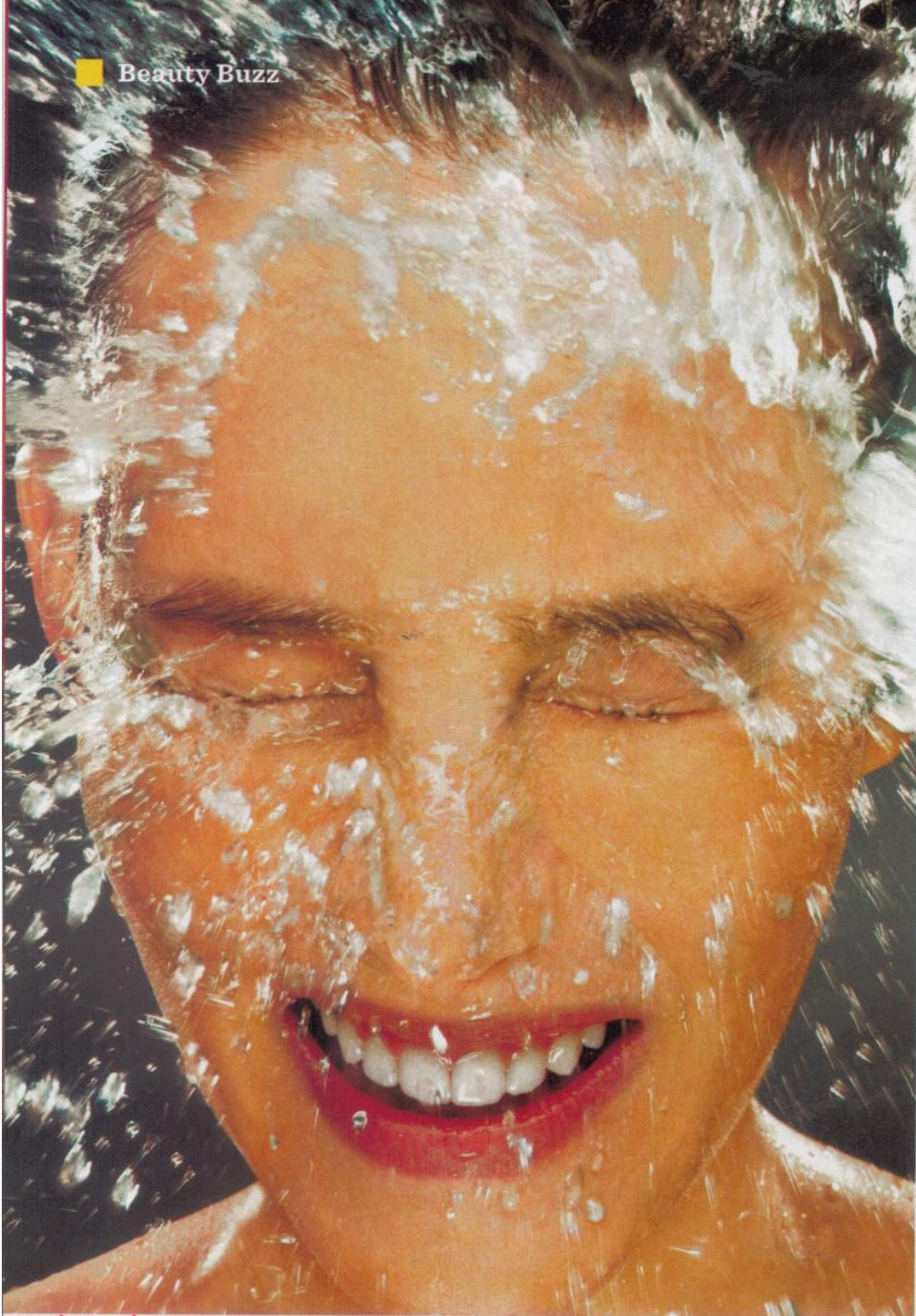
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Acne Anonymous

Some go to extreme lengths to cover their zits. (Just look at this chick.) The smarter solution: Use our pimple-GPS to locate the cause of your breakouts and, more important, the fix. Then find yourself here—in the clear.

By Courtney Dunlop



YOUR ZITS ARE HERE:
Cystic acne on the chin and jawline

How They Got There:
Stress

LET US EXPLAIN: The Scarlet S...how you slay us. More precisely, 97 percent of *WH* readers say they're stressed—and it's showing up on our faces. "The constant pressure of everyday life—to be everywhere at once, to answer that last e-mail—it really damages the skin," explains Los Angeles dermatologist Howard Murad, M.D., whose latest book is—aptly—*Conquering Cultural Stress*. The S word stimulates androgen hormones, which then mess with the oil glands, causing hormonal acne on your chin. And we're not helping

ourselves: "Stressed people are tense and often can't leave pimples alone," says NYC dermatologist and psychiatrist Amy Wechsler, M.D.

NIX 'EM: To relieve stress, Wechsler uses this technique: "Breathe in slowly through the nose and out the mouth. Focusing on the breath lowers anxiety and heart rate." If

picking caused acne scarring, fade marks with marine and botanical extracts plus niacinamide, as in Philosophy No Reason to Hide Multi-Imperfection Serum (\$68, philosophy.com).



YOUR ZITS ARE HERE:
A mix of red zits and whiteheads along your T-zone

How They Got There:
Pollution

LET US EXPLAIN: Nearly half of *WH* readers live in urban areas, where vehicles and industrial sources belch all kinds of nasty stuff that clogs skin. Particle matter—teensy-tiny soot and liquid particles

We're not going to name names, but in a recent poll, 56 percent of *Women's Health* readers admitted they always seem to have a zit or two. If you ask us, that's one or two zits too many. When you're prone to acne (and studies show so many of us are), *anything* can set it off and make it even gnarlier: your diet, your workout, and—we wish we were joking about this—even your city. So no matter how on-point your skin-care routine may be, you can't be truly free of breakouts until you get a handle on those sly culprits. We uncovered five of the most surprising triggers, mapping out precisely where they lurk on your face and how to remedy them fast. So if you've got zits, your confessions are safe with us. The only thing getting outed here are pimples.

Beauty Buzz

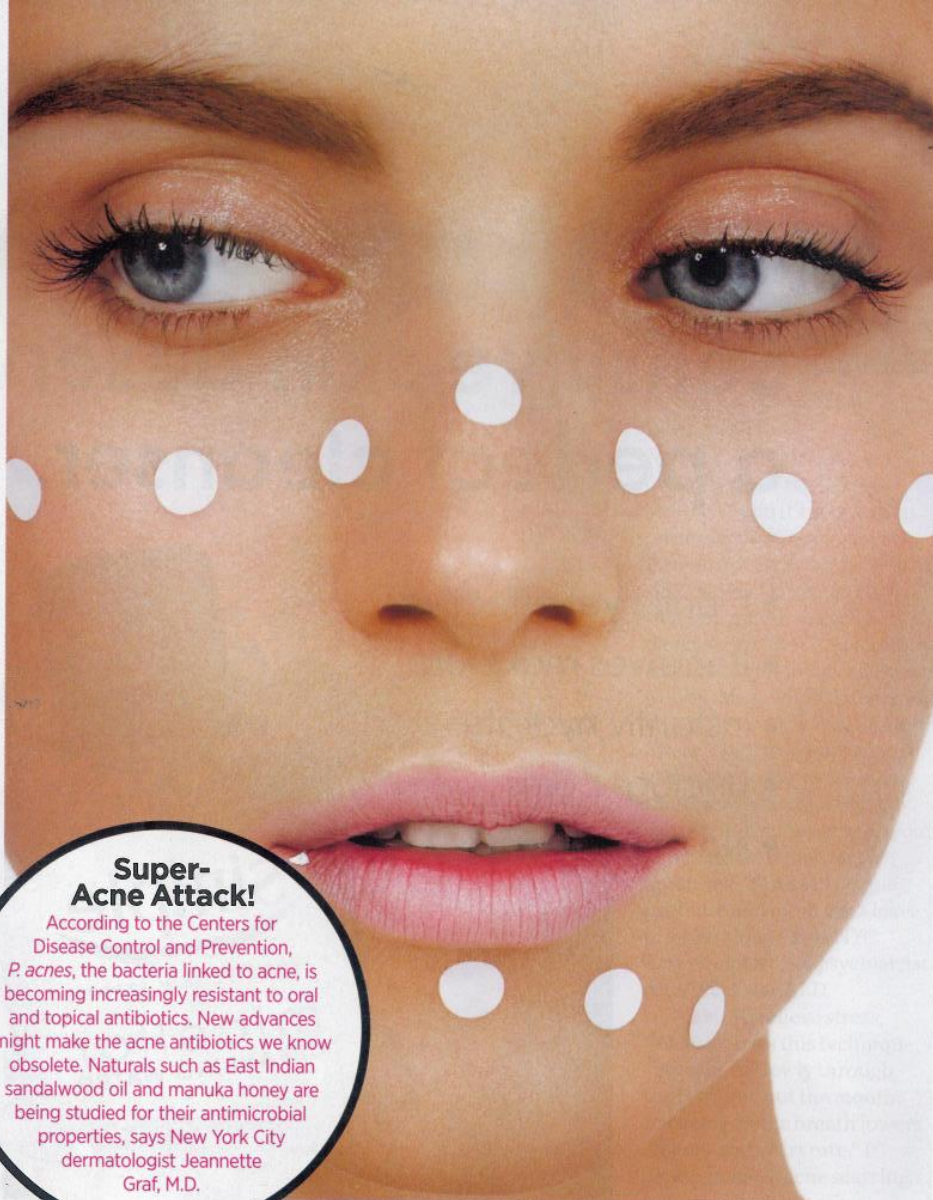
suspended in air—penetrates the complexion, plugging pores and triggering red zits. But wait, there's more:

Noxious gases called ground-level ozone cause a chemical reaction with your skin's natural oils, changing their consistency from a liquid to a wax, which, in turn, ushers in whiteheads.

NIX 'EM:

Find out the pollution level of

your zip code on StateOfTheAir.org, a site run by the American Lung Association that rates cities with letter grades. If yours scored below a B, cleanse like you mean it—particle matter is microscopic, so fingers alone won't cut it. "A cleansing brush removes more soot and debris," says Elizabeth Tanzi, a dermatologist in Washington, D.C. Try Pulsaderm Buddy, (\$69, pulsaderm.com) with a 2 percent salicylic acid wash, like Garnier Clean+ Shine Control Cleansing Gel (\$8, at drugstores). Follow with a serum containing vitamin C or E or aloe to counteract the reaction between gases and your skin, says Dennis Gross, M.D., a NYC dermatologist. Try Clinique Turnaround Revitalizing Serum (\$44, clinique.com).



Super-Acne Attack!

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *P. acnes*, the bacteria linked to acne, is becoming increasingly resistant to oral and topical antibiotics. New advances might make the acne antibiotics we know obsolete. Naturals such as East Indian sandalwood oil and manuka honey are being studied for their antimicrobial properties, says New York City dermatologist Jeannette Graf, M.D.

spur the production of oil, which is a breeding ground for *P. acnes* bacteria. Aesthetician Renée Rouleau says you're more likely to see pustular blemishes (or: "big, infected zits") because of the excess oil. But dry-climate dwellers (if you live in the Southwest, or spend winters in the Northeast) aren't in the clear. That air sucks out moisture, causing dry cells to flake and gunk up the pore walls, "so you'll see little whiteheads."

NIX 'EM: If humidity is your trigger, use an oil-free moisturizer,

says Gross—don't give bacteria more slickness to munch on. Try First Aid Skin Rescue Oil-Free Mattifying Gel (\$30, sephora.com). Dry climate? Get a humidifier.

index foods such as white bread, pasta, and potatoes are associated with higher levels of androgens, (the same hormones triggered by stress), explains Los Angeles dermatologist Jessica Wu, M.D., author of *Feed Your Face*. Just one of these ingredients can cause cysts in the lower half of your face, so make sure your meals and snacks are less than 50 percent carbs, and avoid packaged foods, which tend to be loaded with both sugar and refined carbs.

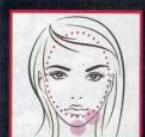
If you've got red, itchy bumps all over, the culinary culprit is likely yeast. It's a condition called acne



YOUR ZITS ARE HERE: Red honkers and whiteheads in the T-zone

How They Got There:
Climate

LET US EXPLAIN: Your zip code might as well be your zit code. Hot, muggy climes (summers on the East Coast, and all year round in the South)



YOUR ZITS ARE HERE: Cystic acne on the chin and jawline; red itchy bumps all over

How They Got There:
Diet

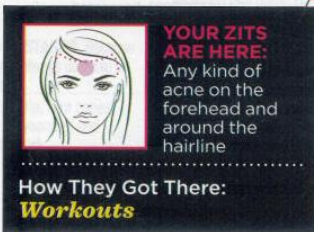
LET US EXPLAIN: Sugar and refined carbs are partners in crime, and they aim straight for your chin. "High glycemic



Beauty Buzz

rosacea that may be related to a reaction of yeast in the hair follicles, says Gross.

NIX 'EM: Food triggers can be hard to isolate, so both Wu and Rouleau suggest you cut out one suspected food you regularly eat (such as yogurt, pasta, protein shakes with whey, or white bread) at a time to see if there's any relief within one to three weeks. "Foods that reduce inflammation can help too," says Wu. Go-tos include wild-caught salmon, leafy greens, berries, green tea, and walnuts. Calm rosacea topically with a sulfur-based anti-inflammatory. Try Peter Thomas Roth Therapeutic Sulfur Masque (\$40, sephora.com).



LET US EXPLAIN: Sweat doesn't cause exercise-induced acne, says NYC dermatologist Jeremy Fenton, M.D. "The hair follicles' bacteria and yeast thrive in moisture." Anywhere sports equipment rubs (a tennis visor against your forehead, a bike helmet strap against your chin) ups your chances for breaking out.



Another sneaky foe that leads to a case of the pimples, says Fenton, is wiping your forehead with your hands or a towel. "A dirty one can transfer bacteria to your face, but the friction of using even a clean towel can cause inflammation," he says. The result? Tiny bumps that can morph into

cystic and pustular acne. Lovely.

NIX 'EM: "Change out of your gym clothes and shower immediately after a workout," Fenton says. That means washing your face (21 percent of you admit to being too beat post-exercise to do that—eek!). Exfoliating regularly with alpha and beta hydroxy acids keeps pores clear; try Neutrogena Pore Refining Exfoliating Cleanser (\$8, at drugstores). Working out with makeup on? Shouldn't be a problem if you're wearing the noncomedogenic kind, says Fenton. "However, many of my patients do report seeing pimples if they wear heavy makeup when sweating." Better safe than sorry: Use a facial wipe before getting active. Try Olay Fresh Effects See Spot Swipe Oil-Reducing Wet Cloths (\$5, at drugstores).

De-Pimp My Skin!

It's not the *cause* of your zits that dictates the topical treatment—it's the *type*. Find your Rx here.

You have...hard, under-the-skin cysts

You need...a treatment product that delivers either sulfur or salicylic acid straight to the spot. Try Dermalogica Concealing Spot Treatment (\$26, dermalogica.com). Or head to the dermatologist, who will shrink that sucker with a cortisone shot.



You have...oozy red zits, or whiteheads

You need...a clay-based mask once a week to draw out impurities, so you're not tempted to pop. Try Lancôme Pure Focus Purifying Mineral Mask with White Clay (\$35, lancome-usa.com). Gold-standard benzoyl peroxide works as a nighttime spot treatment to dry up the pus-like pimples. Try Murad Acne Spot Fast Fix (\$16, murad.com).



You have...red bumps with no pus

You need...exfoliation with lactic or salicylic acid. Try Burt's Bees Natural Acne Solutions Pore Refining Scrub (\$10, at drugstores). ■

