

# The correlation between acne and social and mental health problems

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Researchers have looked into the association between acne and mental health in teenagers and report their findings online in the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*. Their work suggests adverse events including suicidal ideation and depression that have previously been associated with therapies for acne may reflect the burden of substantial acne rather than the effects of medication.

Acne is a skin condition that commonly affects [adolescents](#) during an important period in their social development. [Social relationships](#) change and develop as young adults become increasing independent and physical appearance is an essential factor in maintaining self-image and confidence. An association between some therapies and increased risk of depression, suicidal ideation and suicide has been claimed, but results from controlled studies have not confirmed that claim.

Jon Anders Halvorsen and colleagues review results from a survey of 3775 respondents aged 18-19 in Oslo, Norway. Teenagers with severe acne reported having suicidal thoughts more frequently than teenagers with less acne. Suicidal ideation is a symptom and indicator of emotional distress, but does not necessarily lead to suicide attempts. [Mental health problems](#) and social impairment were also more common in young adults with substantial acne. Twice as many girls and three times as many boys with severe acne reported suicidal ideation compared to peers with little or no acne.

These findings may have implications in the treatment and care of adolescents with [acne](#).

**More information:** [DOI: 10.1038/jid.2010.264](https://doi.org/10.1038/jid.2010.264)

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