

WINNING THE WAR ON acne

NEW PROCEDURE HAILED AS WEAPON OF CHOICE

BY LINDSAY LYON
Premium Health News Service

In the fight against her acne, Veronica Prudencio was losing. Proactiv Solution, Clearasil, Murad, Neutrogena, grease-free diets, medical spa treatments, lemon juice, rice water facials — none of them worked. Not even remotely. She'd "spent thousands upon thousands of dollars, and tried everything," says the 21-year-old college student in Arlington, Va.

Then, at her "breaking point," Prudencio decided to test out a newly approved treatment for persistent acne that dermatologists and patients alike describe as a breakthrough. In photopneumatic therapy, the skin is suctioned with a vacuum-like device — bringing the bad stuff to the surface — then beamed with intense, pulsed light. The two-pronged process both stuns and deactivates hyperactive oil glands and kills the bacteria they nourish, temporarily quashing the source of breakouts in one 20-minute swoop.

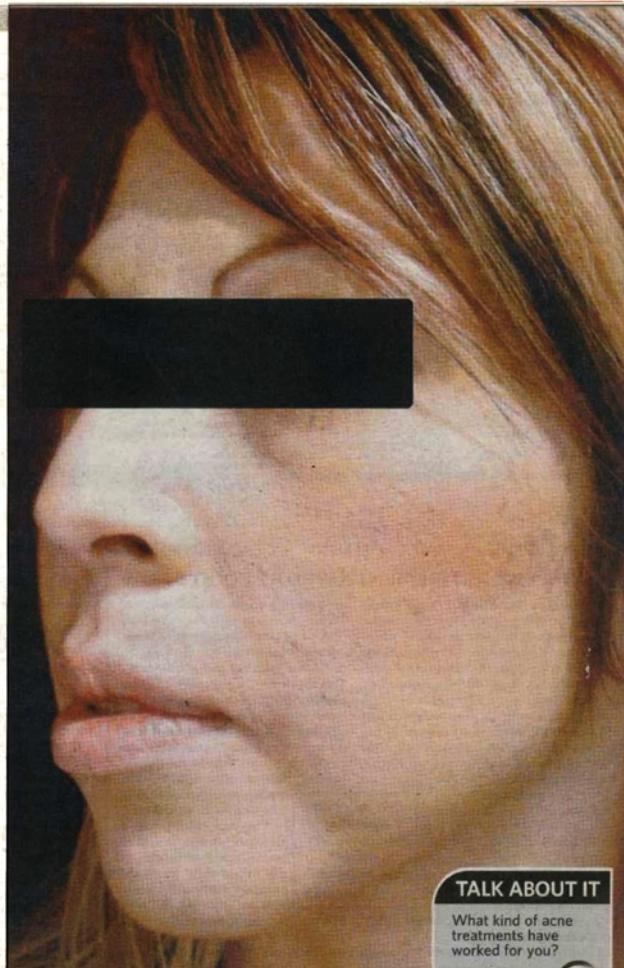
While not a cure, pimples begin to dry out and disappear after subsequent sessions, and then red marks (which linger after zits heal) fade.

"My face was covered in pimples," says Prudencio, who noticed improvement after two week-apart treatment rounds. She's undergone six to date. "Now, it's 100 percent better." Several small studies reveal



BEFORE

success stories like hers. The device has been shown to yield high rates of acne clear-up among patients for whom topical creams and oral antibiotics simply don't work. Even when they do work, traditional drugs can take months to produce results; this therapy typically brings improvement after just three sessions, says Gilly Munavalli, a clinical instructor of dermatology at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, who led one of the trials (and received a discounted device from the manufacturer). "It's probably the most effective mechanical device on the



AFTER

market," says Dale Isaacson, the dermatologist who treated Prudencio and has no financial ties to the company. He and others usually recommend a five-treatment minimum for best results.

Side effects

Side effects are reportedly mild: Patients say it's pretty painless but can cause short-

lived redness or slight swelling. Isaacson advises darker-skinned patients to proceed with caution, however: The pulsed-light component of treatment can cause pigmentation changes.

Dermatologist Suzanne Sirota Rozenberg says she's been using the machine, called Isolaz, for five months in her Woodmere practice. "I love it," she says. "It's very tolerable, the patients

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like it, and the results are very quickly appreciated."

Rozenberg says the new laser is not only an effective treatment for acne, but also hair reduction and removal and skin rejuvenation, including treating redness, skin pigmentation and sun damage.

Huntington dermatologist Dr. Roger Koren says he's been using the new treatment

ZIT ZAPPER

The Isolaz, below, a new device for treating acne, and, at left, "before" and "after" photos of a patient who received the treatment.

