

Guest Editorial

Acne 2002

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The latter part of the term *acne vulgaris* remains as appropriate now as when it was first named. *Vulgaris*, Latin for “common,” appropriately describes one of the most prevalent diseases worldwide. Although one of the best understood pathophysiologic diseases, acne remains a continuing challenge in modern dermatologic practice. Highly prevalent and frequently the etiology of permanent emotional and physical damage, acne is far from a panacea.

At SUNY Downstate Medical Center, we are dedicated to improving clinical approaches to and developing new treatment options for acne. As part of our ongoing commitment, SUNY has made contributions to this special focus issue of *Cutis*[®] and its sister journal, *Cosmetic Dermatology*[®]. We will review past and present knowledge and look to the future for new concepts in the management of acne. In addition, we will cover the full spectrum of the disease from diagnosis to treatment and address unique issues affecting patients with acne.

This issue's 2 CME articles, “Acne Vulgaris, I: Pathogenesis and Diagnosis” and “Acne Vulgaris, II: Treatment,” by Steve S. Oberemok, MD, and Alan R. Shalita, MD, review clinical features, options for oral and topical therapies, and pathophysiology. Many options for acne therapy exist

because our knowledge of pathogenesis is clearer, which offers better strategic approaches for acne management. Additionally, multiple interventions available for the practitioner are reviewed.

Isotretinoin is the only available therapeutic agent that targets all of the pathogenic factors of acne. Recent media reports allege that the drug causes suicide, depression, and has other serious side effects. Although some of these claims may have some validity, the controversy surrounding the use of isotretinoin has caused confusion for some practitioners. We hope to clarify this situation. The article, “Acne and the Psyche,” by Hilary Baldwin, MD, reviews what is known about the effects of acne on the personality of the patient distinct from the side effects of the medication. In “Isotretinoin Made S.M.A.R.T.[™] and Simple,” Eve J. Lowenstein, MD, PhD, outlines the new S.M.A.R.T. program guidelines for administering the drug and reviews the literature regarding reported side effects.

Dermatologists have always been leaders in the management of this common disease. We hope that these issues of *Cutis* and *Cosmetic Dermatology* review, instruct, and enlighten. We would like to thank the entire SUNY Downstate family for their assistance in bringing this project to fruition.