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## Why Your Blackhead Pops Up in the Same Spot

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No matter how many times you wash, scrub, or begrudgingly pop (eek!) that blackhead, which has so sweetly claimed real estate across your nose, it'll resurface weeks (maybe even days) later, as if it were an extra in *The Walking Dead*. What gives?

Turns out, that zombie blemish isn't as uncommon as you'd think. "It is an interesting and common occurrence to have a pimple or blackhead pop up in the same spot," says **Ava Shamban**, a Los Angeles-based dermatologist. As for the cause of said alive-again blemish, well, experts aren't really sure — but they have some ideas. "One possible explanation is that there are a cluster of oil glands, or even a cluster of bacteria, that live in that location, which constantly cause inflammation," says Shamban.

And for those blackheads that keep re-appearing on the nose? Shari Marchbein, a dermatologist and clinical assistant professor of dermatology at New York University School of Medicine, says they may not actually *be* blackheads at all. "On the nose, blackheads are often mistaken for simply enlarged pores — which are genetically predetermined and for which little can be done to truly change this — or a condition called, trichostasis spinulosa," she says.

Generally speaking, trichostasis is often under-recognized (and under-diagnosed) but is characterized as "black dots on the nose, which are actually a combination of very small hairs, bacteria, and oil production from the sebaceous gland," says Marchbein. That combo of gunk is probably what you see ooze out pores during a popping sesh.

The easiest way to eradicate that "blackhead" debris without squeezing, squishing, or popping? Following a consistent daily regimen — whether you see spots or not. "We know that acne-prone skin is constantly forming new pimples — even if you do not see the red bump or the blackhead," says Shamban.

Because of that, she recommends using acne treatments spiked with bacteria-busting ingredients, like benzoyl peroxide (we like Clearasil's Ultra Rapid Action Vanishing Treatment Cream), retinoids (this under-\$25 treatment from Neutrogena), or salicylic acid (like the Bioré Complexion Clearing Blemish Fighting Ice Cleanser) to stop reoccurring blemishes in their tracks.

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