When you notice a skin condition on your face, you want to get rid of it quickly! Don’t worry, our expert is here to offer some helpful advice...

Meet the Expert
Dr Adam Friedmann is a Consultant Dermatologist at Harley Street Dermatology Clinic and also at London’s Whittington Hospital.

Acne
Most people get the occasional zit, but acne can feel a lot worse. While most who suffer get better in their teens, for some, it stays for years. Dr Friedmann says there are three reasons why people get acne: it’s related to hormones, overactive sebaceous glands or a bacterial secondary infection.

Treatment
For women, your doctor can prescribe medication that suppresses hormones — like the pill. If your acne’s linked to a secondary infection you can get antibiotics. And if it’s your sebaceous glands that need attention, you’ll need to be treated with either a cream from the doc or retinoid pills, which you’ll need to see a dermatologist consultant to get. ‘Only consultants can prescribe Roaccutane (isotretinoin) and it can cure acne — but you need to be aware that it’s not without side-effects,” says Dr Friedmann. If you’re fobbed off with “oh don’t worry it’s only acne, it will get better,” then ask to be referred to a consultant.

Warts
We’re used to warts on hands and feet, but did you know you can get them on your face, too? When you come into contact with the human papilloma virus, it gets into your cells and produces the unseemly spots — whether they’re on your toes or nose! Unfortunately it’s hard to avoid getting them but the good news is that warts will go away on their own — though it can take a while. Dr Friedmann explains: ‘When you get them on the face, warts can last for many months and they will spread if you touch them with your hand.’ But there are treatments which can speed up the healing process.

Treatment
Get your body to mount its own immune response to the wart by making the wart irritated and unhappy. You’ve got various creams that you can use, or another option is cryotherapy, which freezes off warts,” says Dr Friedmann. ‘If you want to avoid all irritants, wash with a cream soap, moisturise with a gentle cream and then use a combination of weak cortisone and antifungal. That’s normally enough to control it. If topical treatments don’t work there’s phototherapy, sunlight therapy or even systemic drugs. Eczema should not interfere with people’s lives.

Eczema
Itchy, flaky skin on your face? It could be eczema, and the first thing your doc will need to do is discover the cause. It could be that you’re having an allergic reaction — whether that’s to make-up, perfume or even washing detergent.

Ruling out contact allergy eczema is the first thing we do, as if it’s an allergy and you stop coming into contact with the product then you’ll get better. If there’s no contact allergy then it’s a case of you needing to manage the symptoms,” Dr Friedmann explains. ‘People washing their face with caustic soaps or disinfectants can make their eczema worse.’

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Coldsore
Feeling run down? Tired or stressed? Well if you’re prone to cold sores it’s likely you might see one. ‘Cold sores are very common and lots of the population have the herpes simplex virus living in their nerve routes. They’ll pop up when you’re feeling under the weather. You can even get them in the sunshine on your immune system gets suppressed,” says Dr Friedmann.

Treatment
Antivirals have been created in the last 20 years or so, which treat them very well,” says Dr Friedmann. ‘They’re available in creams or pills. The active ingredient people use is acyclovir. You’ll probably have heard of this at your chemist — creams like Zovirax contain it. The pills are stronger than the creams, but you’ll need a prescription,” says Dr Friedmann.