

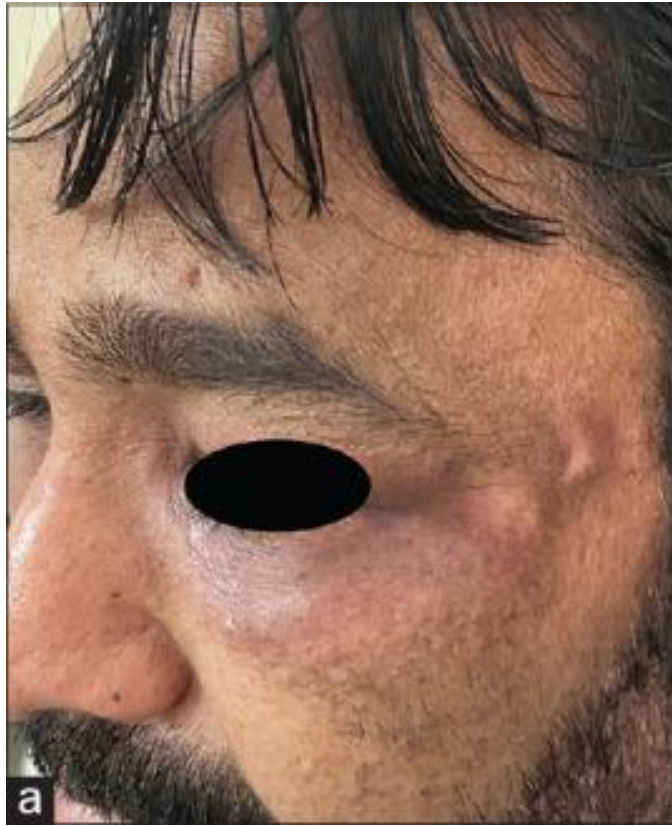
MISINFORMATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA

A DERMATOLOGIST'S PERSPECTIVE

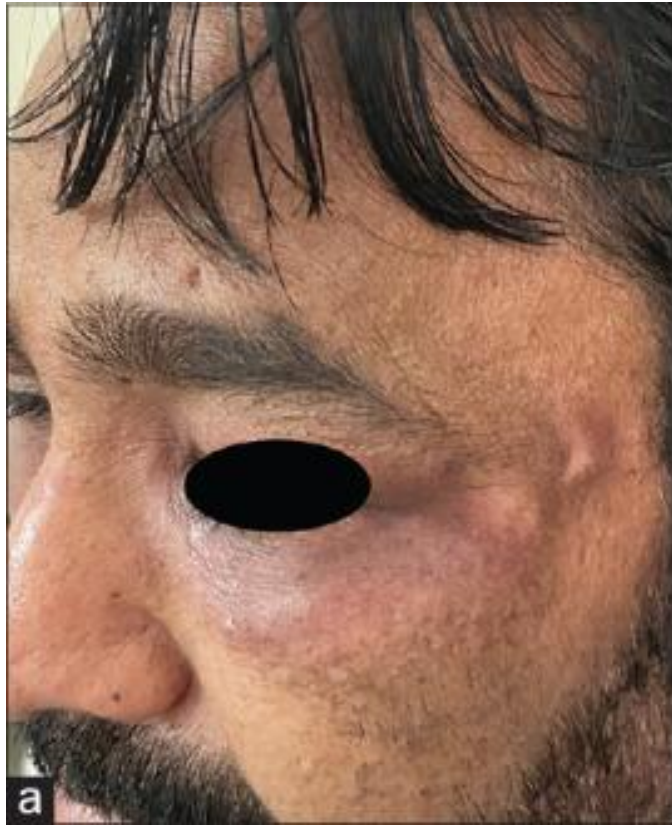
Alpana Mohta, MD, DNB

NMC Medical Centre, Sharjah, UAE






- 40-year-old male
- Periorbital diffuse woody-hard induration.
- Claimed bee sting reaction \neq clinical picture. Spurious history?
- Differentials: Pseudolymphoma, calcinosis cutis.



- Later admitted to self-injecting sweet-almond oil + oil extracted from Vitamin E capsules 8 weeks ago.
- Why? “Because I saw a video on YouTube that says this mixture is a natural under-eye filler.”

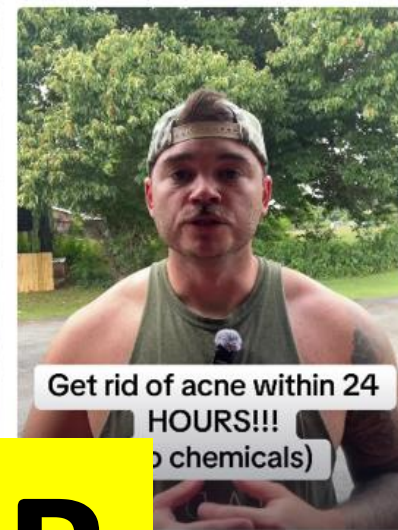
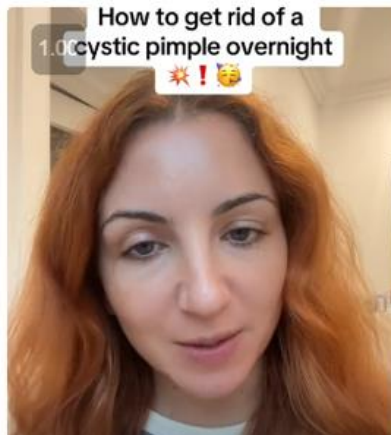
The background of the slide features three panels of a patient's face, showing the forehead and eye area. The skin appears to have some irregularities or lesions, which are the focus of the medical case presented.

LETTER ▶ Indian Dermatol Online J. 2023 Oct 5;15(2):297–299. doi: [10.4103/idoj.idoj_33_23](https://doi.org/10.4103/idoj.idoj_33_23) [↗](#)

Facial Oil-Granuloma due to Almond Oil and Vitamin E Oil Injection

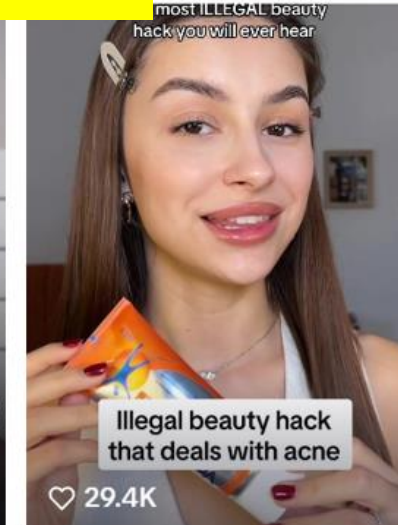
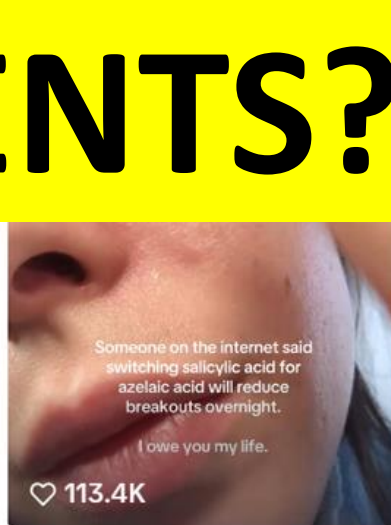
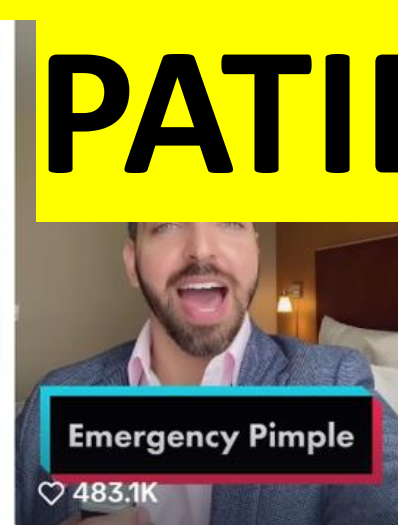
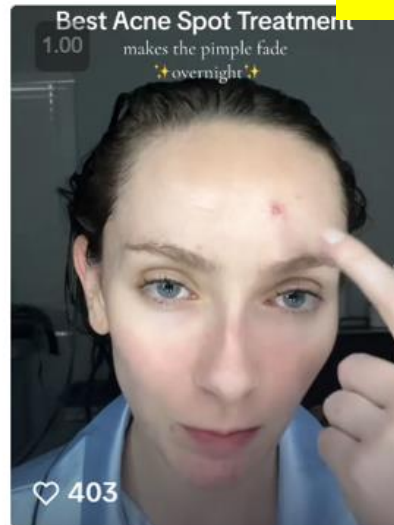
[Sumiti Pareek](#)¹, [Alpana Mohta](#)^{1,✉}, [Bhikam C Ghiya](#)¹, [Prasoon Soni](#)¹

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WHO'S TREATING YOUR PATIENTS?

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Health Advise Seeking Pattern

- Social Media (SM) is the ‘new waiting room.’
- 70%+ adults search health info.online.¹
- “Peer-to-peer healthcare” communities share personal experiences
→ health info. accessible, peer validated, and convenient.

- Info. seeking behavior on SM:

1. Active (search terms and communities)




2. Passive (feed from peer interactions and algorithm)



Source

1. <https://www.jmir.org/2024/1/e38786/>

Patients' preferences on atopic dermatitis skincare and social media use: a qualitative study

[Roxana Mazilu](#)¹, [Stefanie Ziehfreund](#)¹, [Stephan Traidl](#)², [Alexander Zink](#)^{1,3}, 

Why They Use SM?

- Niche products, community support

“I learned more from social media about managing my lifestyle than from my doctors.”







How They Choose Products?







- “Natural,” reviews, fear of steroids (corticophobia)







Why They're Cautious?







- Too many opinions, too much confusion







“There’s simply too large a range of products and opinions... It becomes difficult to decide.”







Platform	Largest demographics	Volume of info.	Fact-checking & regulation policies
 Facebook	>35 yrs	Extensive (Close communities)	Meta recently ended 3 rd party fact-checking. Crowd-sourced, community-driven. No medical expert oversight.
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 Instagram	18-34 yrs	Moderate	Meta policies.
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(Let users decide what's true based on consensus)
Critique: Relies on average user judgment over expert evidence

Platform	Primary info.seeking route	Most common demographics	Volume of info.	Fact-checking & regulation policies
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 Youtube	Active >> Passive	All ages	Extensive	Active but limited . User reports and algorithms.
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52787 TikTok Skincare Trends and their Clinical Evidence

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Affiliations & Notes ▾ Article Info ▾

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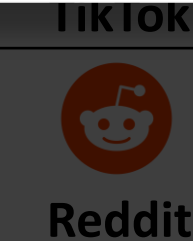
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Original Article VOLUME: 19 ISSUE: 1 P: 68 – 73 March 2025

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Turk J Dermatol 2025;19(1):68-73 DOI: 10.4274/tjd.galenos.2025.08370

 Dilek Menteşoğlu   Gökçe Işıl Kurmuş  Selda Pelin Kartal



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Passive		

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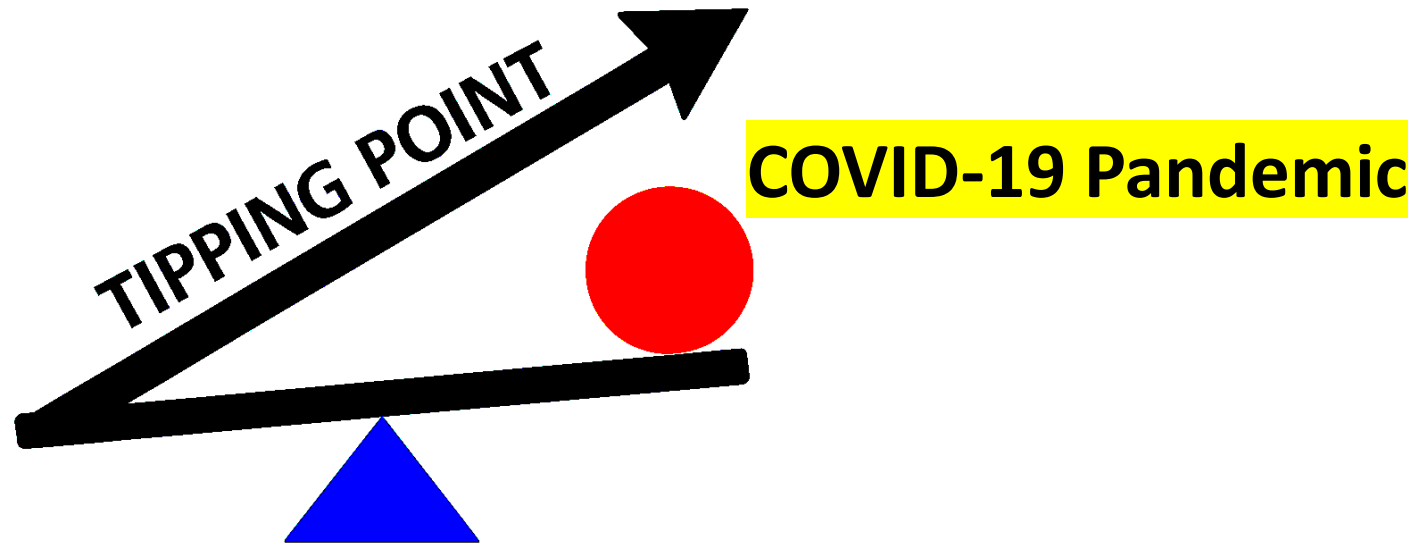
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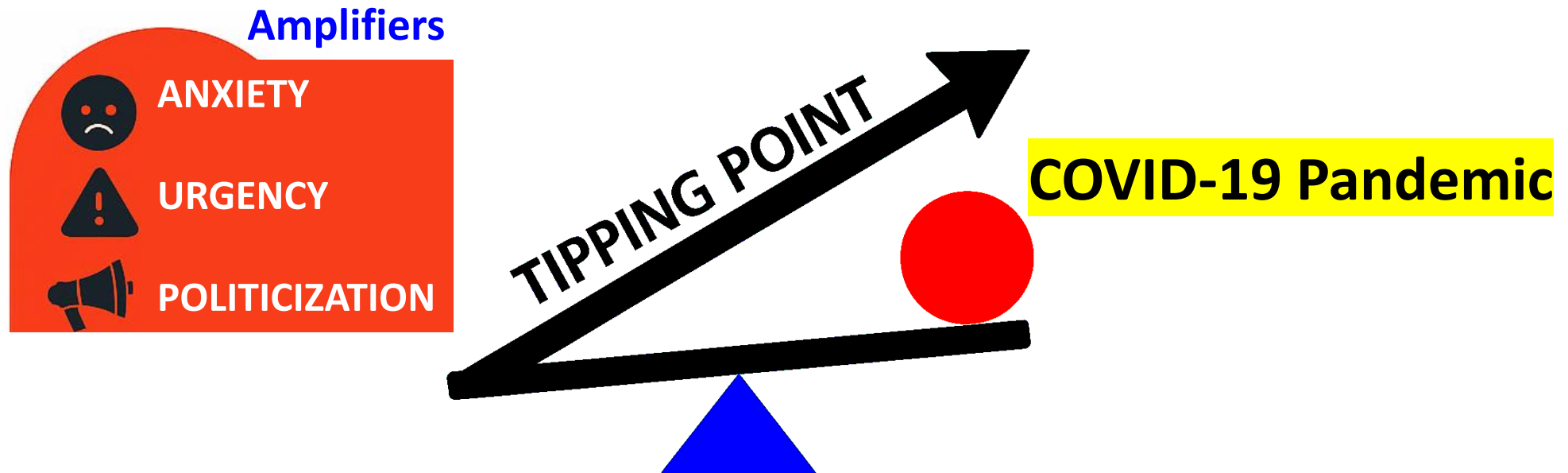
 [Dilek Menteşoğlu](#)   [Gökçe Işıl Kurmuş](#)  [Selda Pelin Kartal](#)

Two years after an open letter to YouTube, fact-checkers remain dissatisfied with the platform's inaction

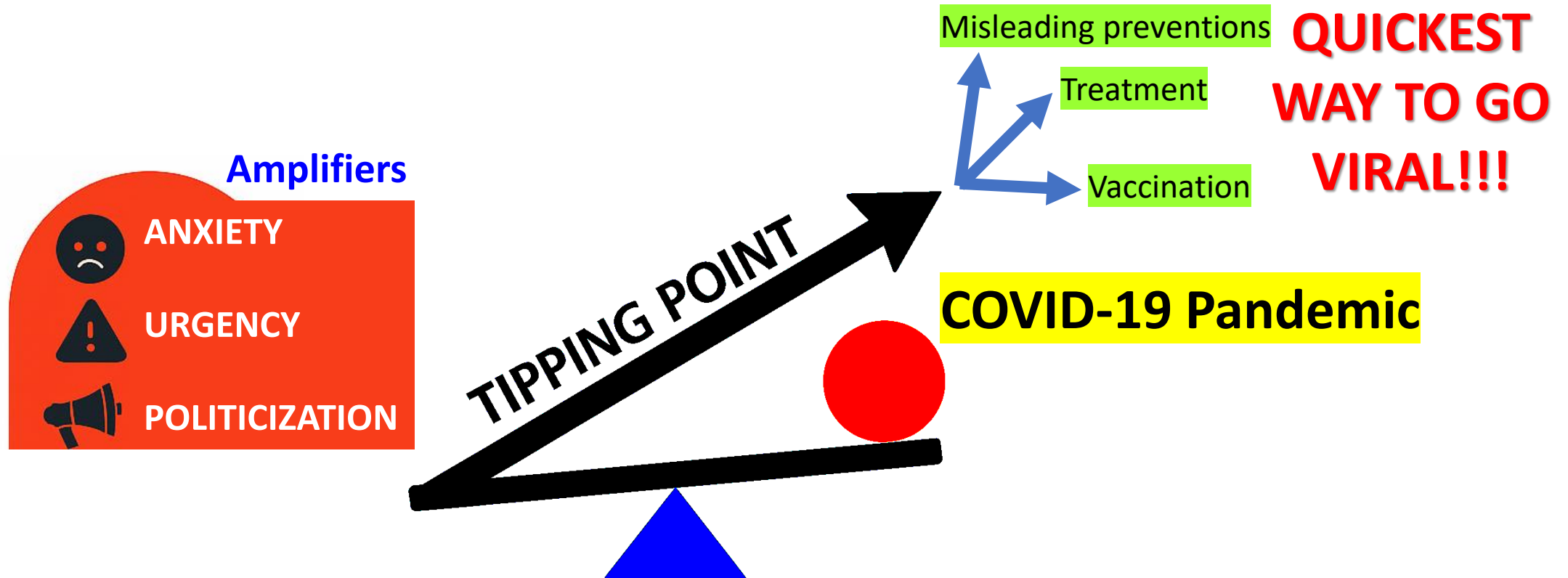
The Burden of SM Misinformation



The Burden of SM Misinformation



The Burden of SM Misinformation



- Misinformation affects 10–30% of all health content.^{1,2}
- Dermatology, being a visual branch, is especially vulnerable.

Hashtag	Instagram Posts	TikTok Posts
#skincare	136M	32.4M
#acne	12.9M	3.3 M
#alopecia	3.3M	417K
#eczema	2.6M	267.8 K
#psoriasis	2M	168.5K
#lupus	1.6M	267.6K
#skinfluencer	498K	28K
#skinCancer	460K	36.3K
#TSW	401K	121K
#hives	131K	13.5K
#urticaria	75K	8,060

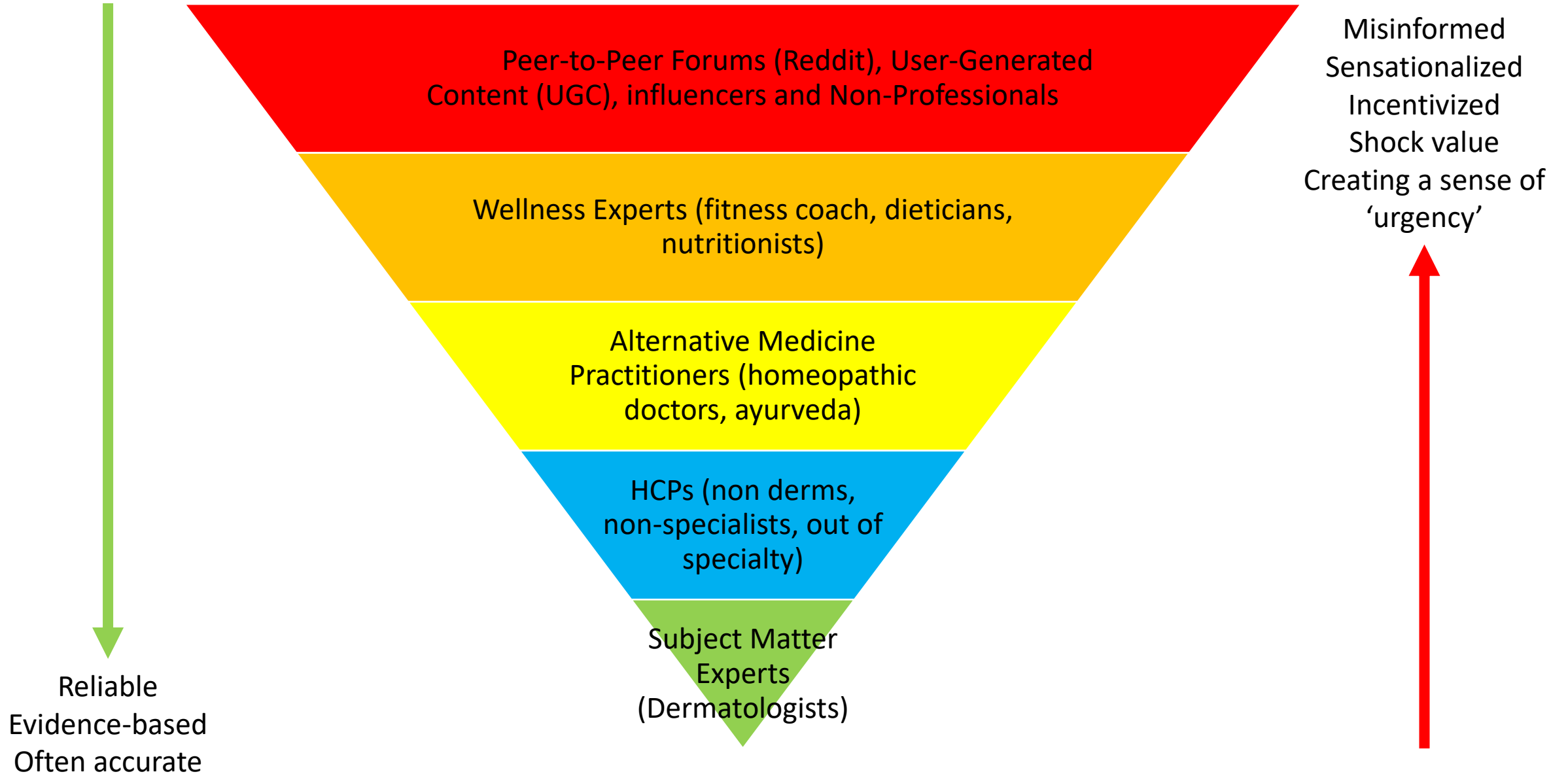
Data accurate as of 31 March 2025

Sources

1. Borges do Nascimento IJ, et al. Infodemics and health misinformation: a systematic review of reviews. Bull World Health Organ. 2022;100(9):544-56149.
2. Suarez-Lledo V, et al. Prevalence of Health Misinformation on Social Media: Systematic Review. J Med Internet Res 2021;23(1):e17187

Who is Spreading
Misinformation?

DERMATOLOGY MISINFORMATION PYRAMID



Why the Lie Wins?

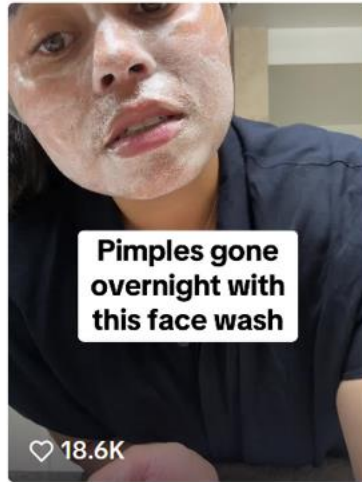
- Simplicity vs. complexity

Eg. “Cure acne overnight” beats “evidence-based treatment for acne.”

“cure acne overnight”



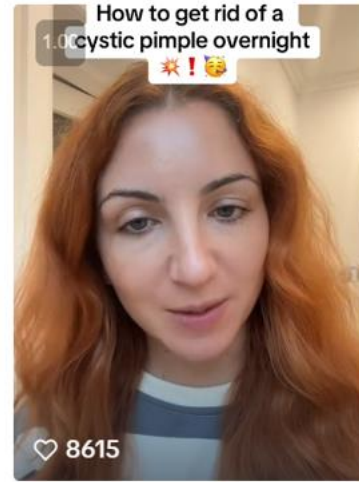
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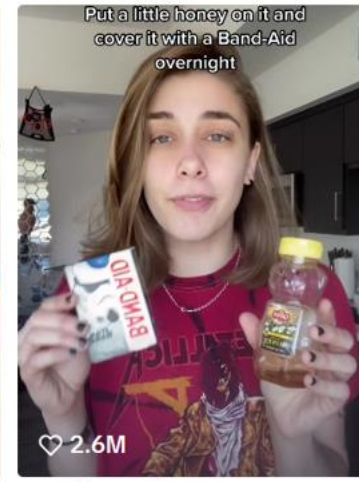
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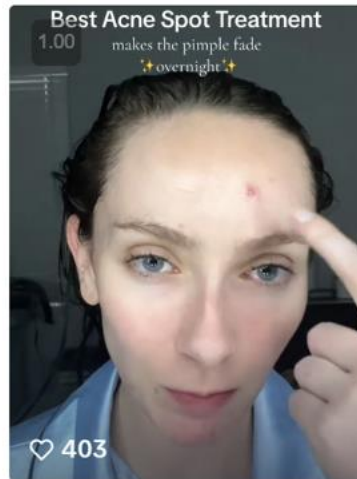
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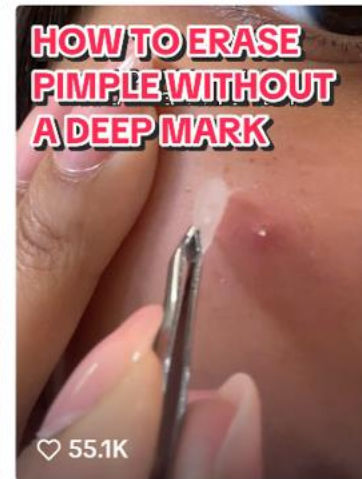
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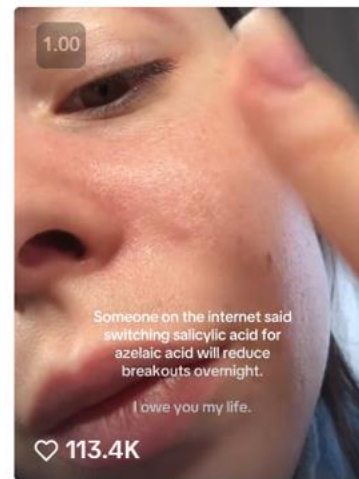
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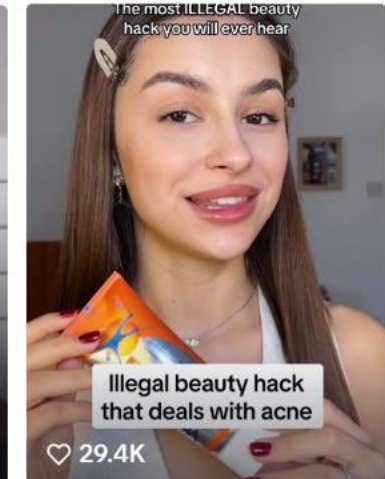
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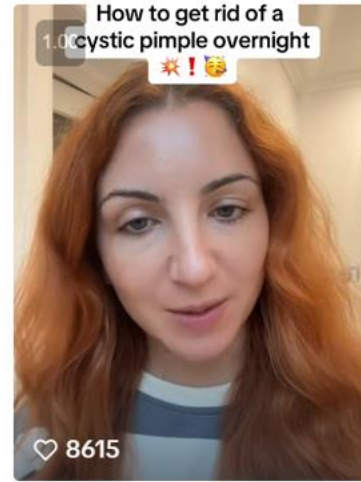
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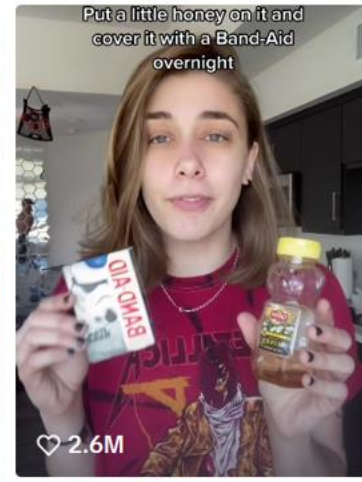
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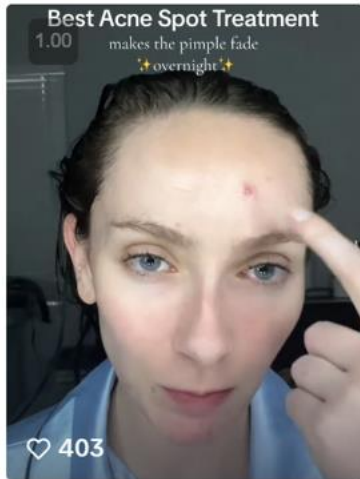
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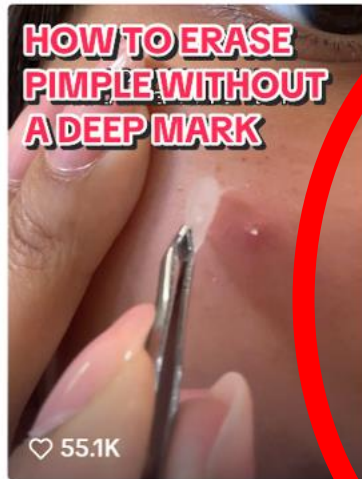
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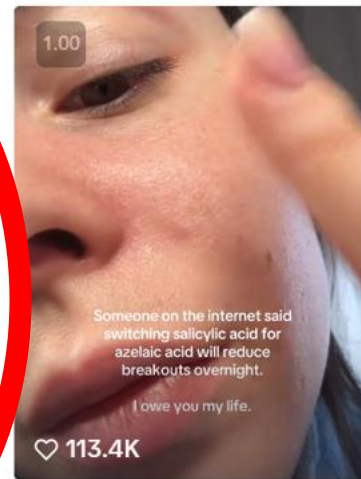
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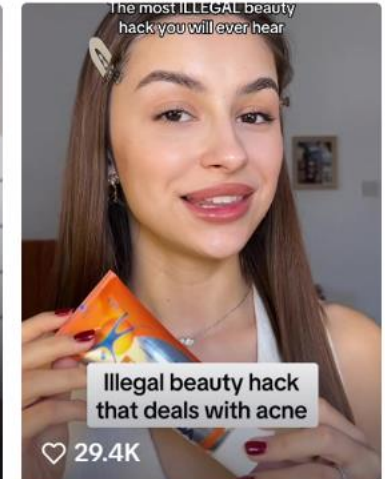
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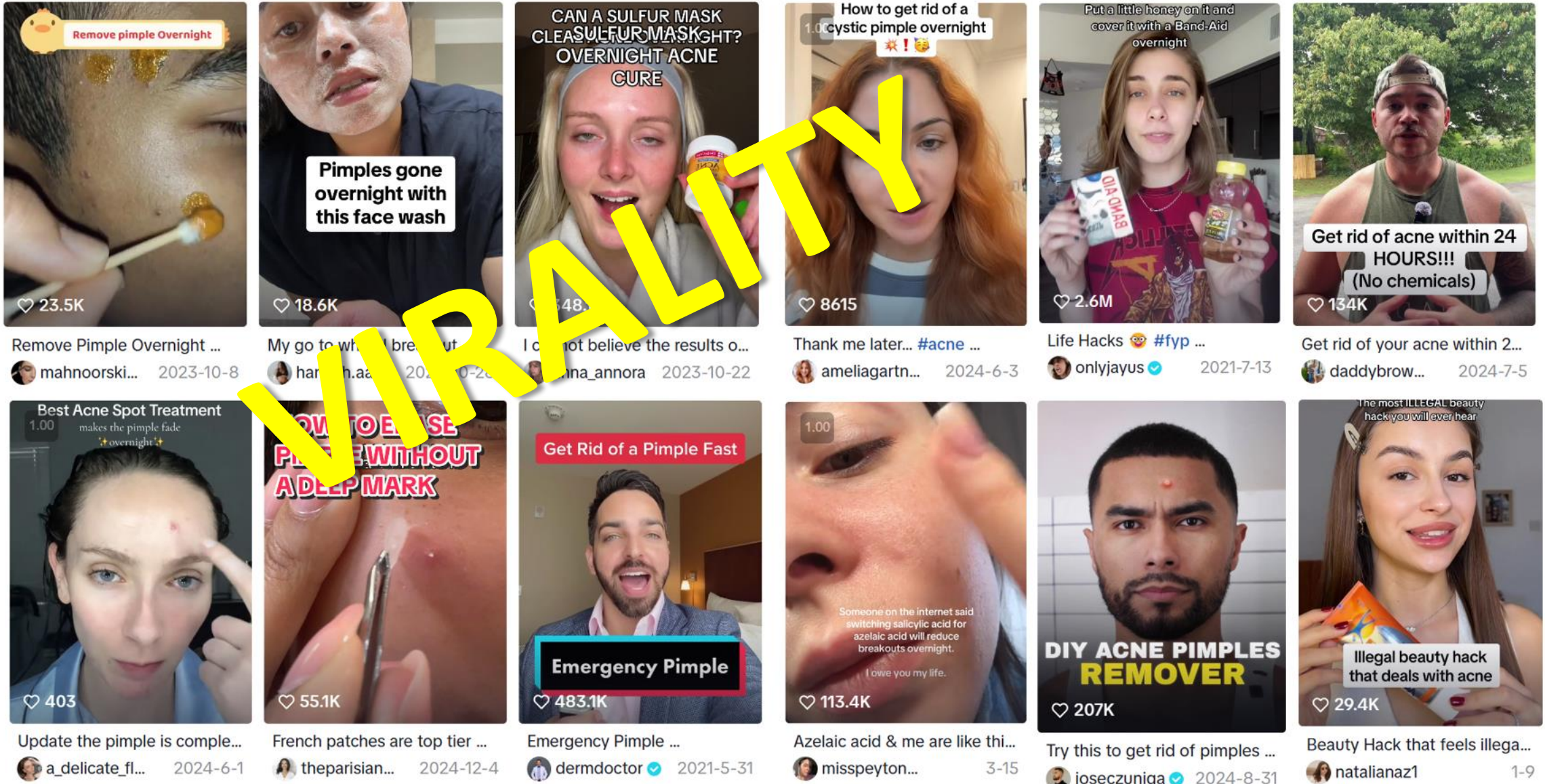


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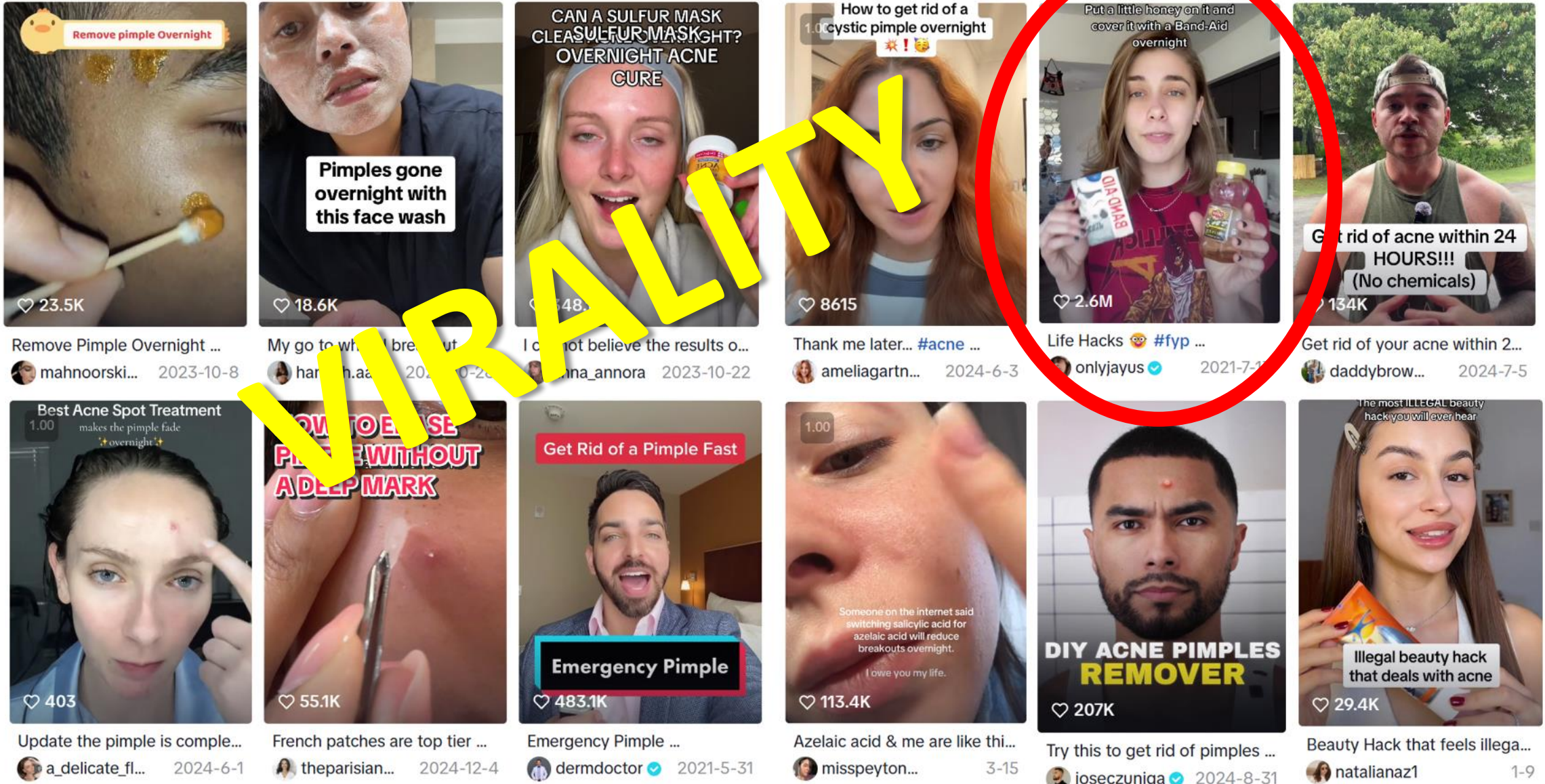


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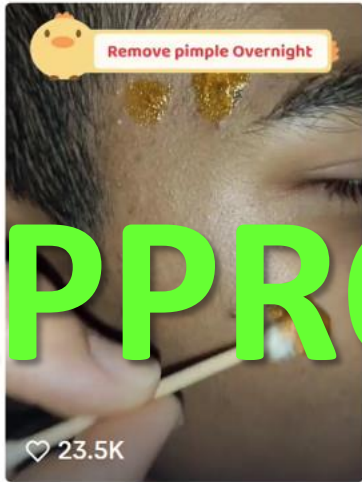


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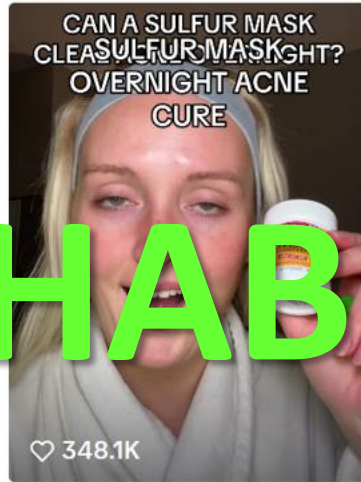
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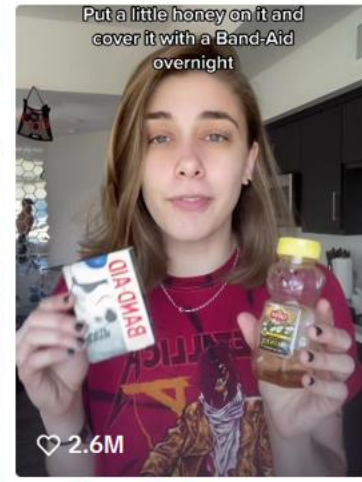
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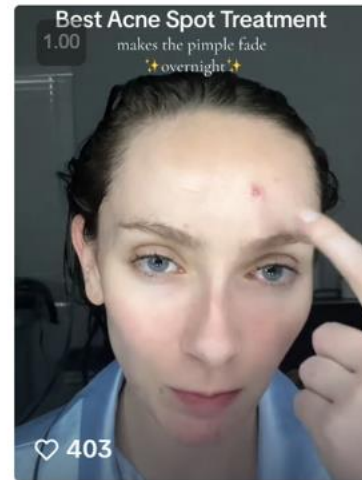
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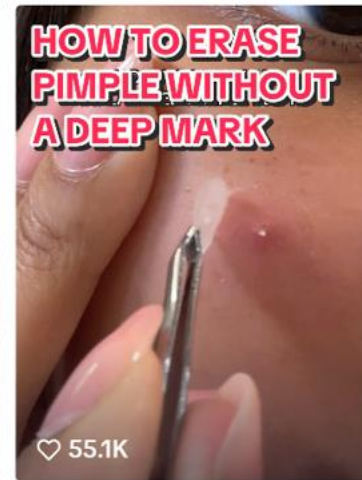
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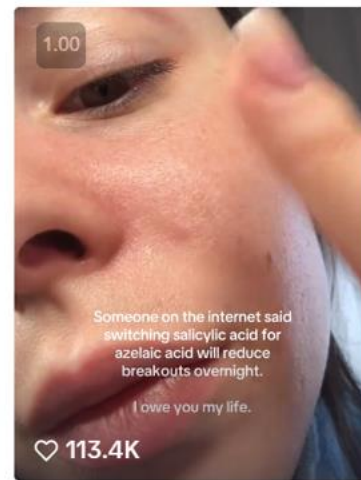
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French patches are top tier ...
theparisian... 2024-12-4



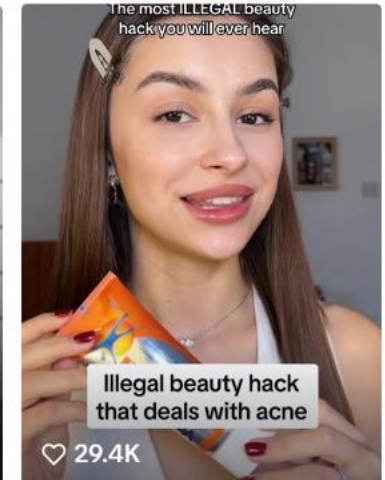
Emergency Pimple ...
dermdoctor 2021-5-31



Azelaic acid & me are like thi...
misspeyton... 3-15



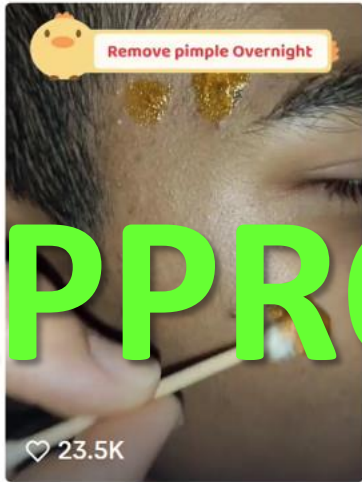
Try this to get rid of pimples ...
joseczuniga 2024-8-31



Beauty Hack that feels illeg...
natalianaz1 1-9

“cure acne overnight”

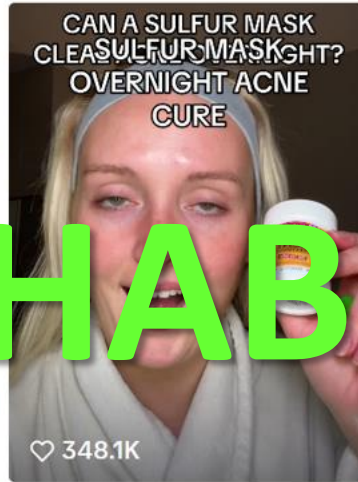
APPROACHABLE



Remove Pimple Overnight ...
mahnoorski... 2023-10-8



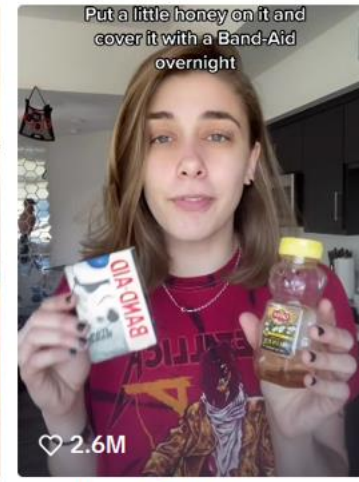
My go to when I breakout ...
hannah.aar... 2024-10-28



I cannot believe the results o...
anna_annora 2023-10-22



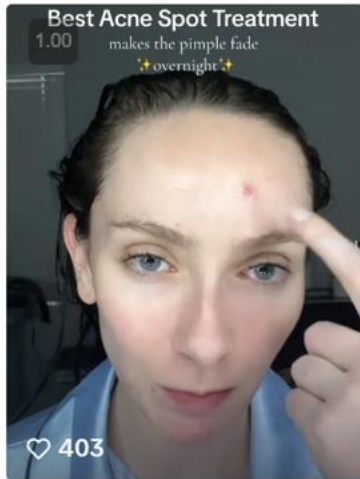
Thank me later... #acne ...
ameliagartn... 2024-6-3



Life Hacks 🧐 #fyp ...
only... 2021-7-13



Get rid of your acne within 2...
daddybrow... 2024-7-5



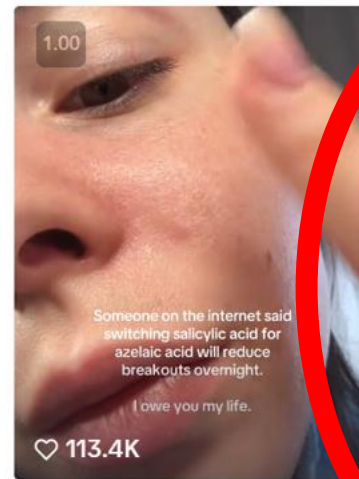
Update the pimple is comple...
a_delicate_fl... 2024-6-1



French patches are top tier ...
theparisian... 2024-12-4



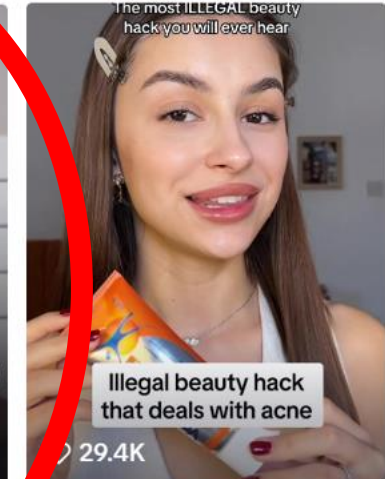
Emergency Pimple ...
dermdoctor 2021-5-31



Azelaic acid & me are like thi...
misspeyton... 3-15

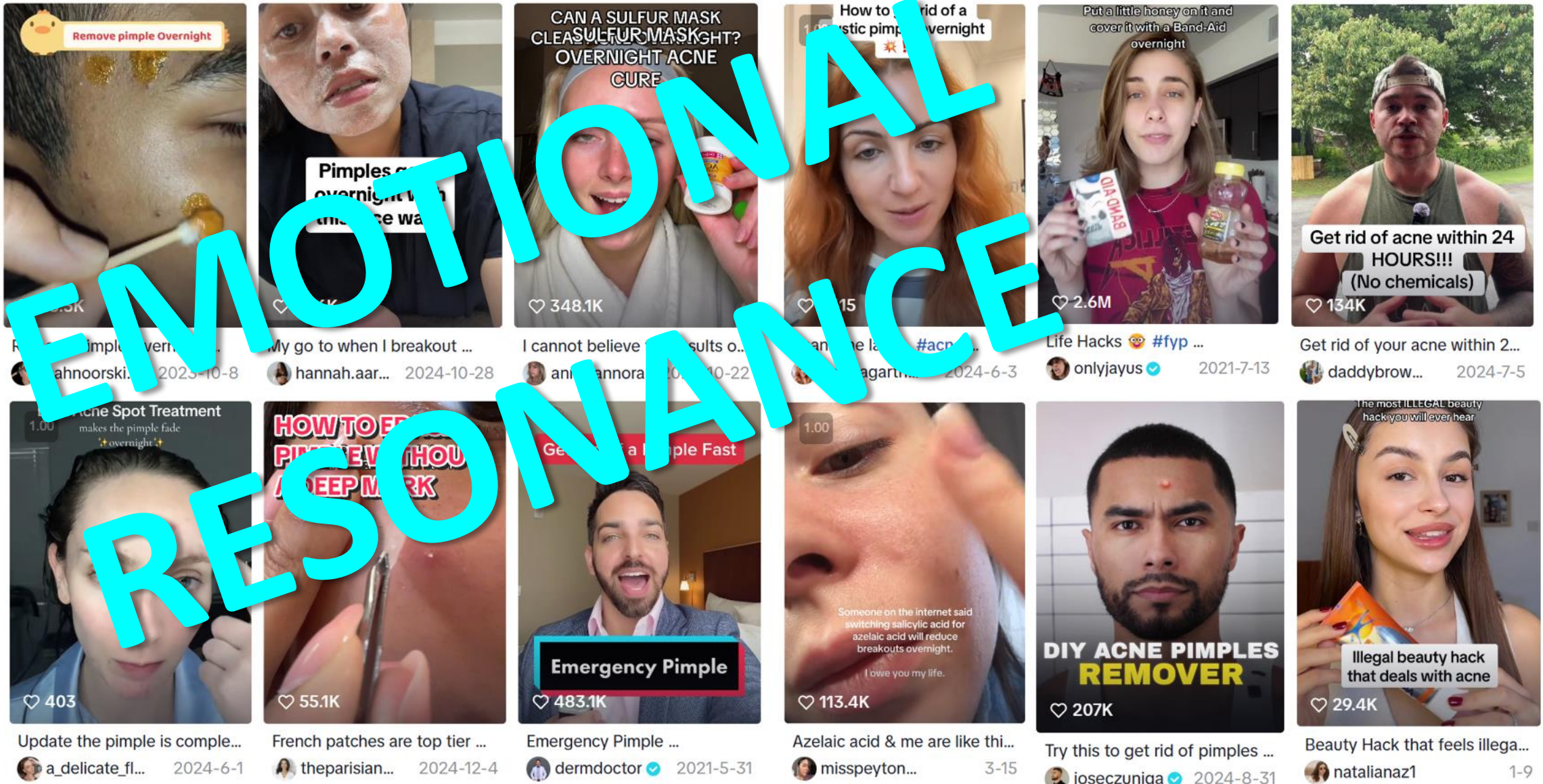


Try this to get rid of pimples ...
joseczuniga 2024-8-1



Beauty Hack that feels illeg...
natalianaz1 1-9

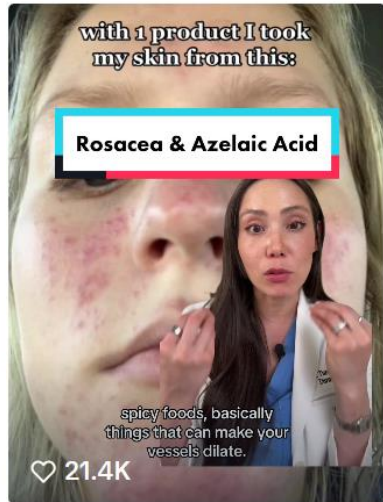
“cure acne overnight”



“cure acne overnight”



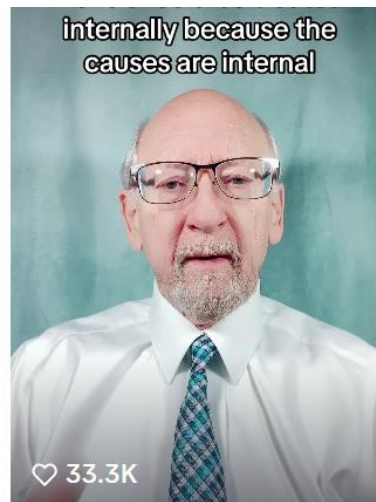
“evidence based treatment for acne”



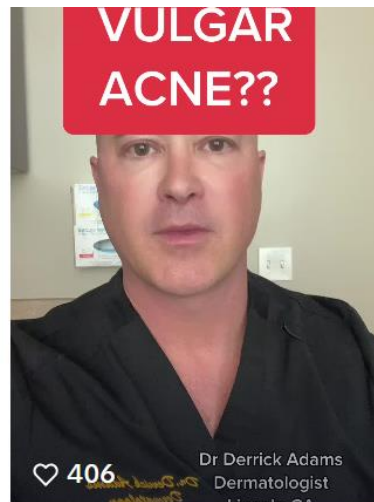
One of my favorite topical pr...
dr.mamina 2023-6-17



B Vitamins for acne! In healt...
dermatolog... 2023-12-14



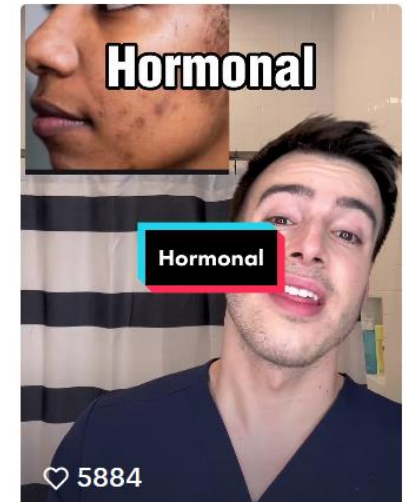
The causes of acne are inter...
drccurtis 2023-12-30



#fyp #dermatologist ...
twelvebridg... 2023-5-6



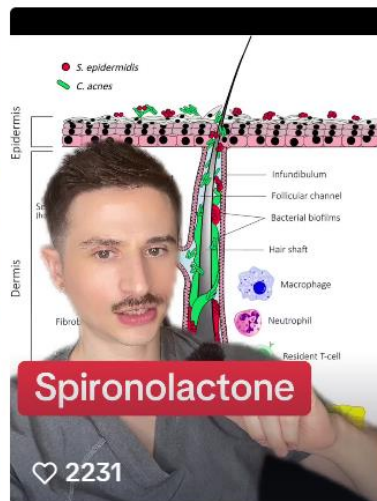
💎 Laser Acne Treatment ...
droyetakin 2-21



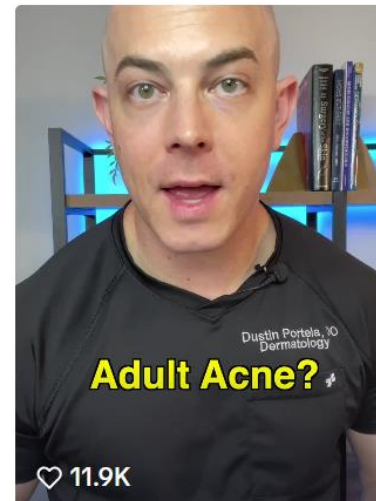
Let's talk about it: hormonal ...
drcharlesmd1 2023-2-2



Acne Vulgaris Treatment ...
muzammilp... 2023-5-24



What #acne topics or treatm...
dermangelo 2024-7-4



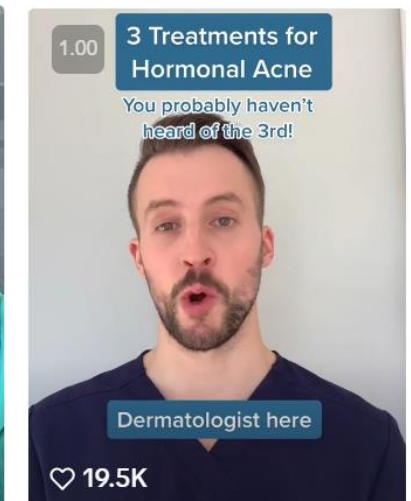
#LaRochePosayPartner Gen...
drdustinpor... 2022-8-19



How to treat deep, painful a...
doctoryoun 2022-7-27



Breaking down some of the ...
drpimplepo... 2023-11-18



3 treatments for hormonal a...
dermarkolo... 2021-9-20

Eczema Misinformation

how to get rid of eczema on face ...



ECZEMA

Avoid These 5 Foods









Asha ✨ SKINCARE || JEWELRY

My dermatologist advice me not to use dettol to bath.

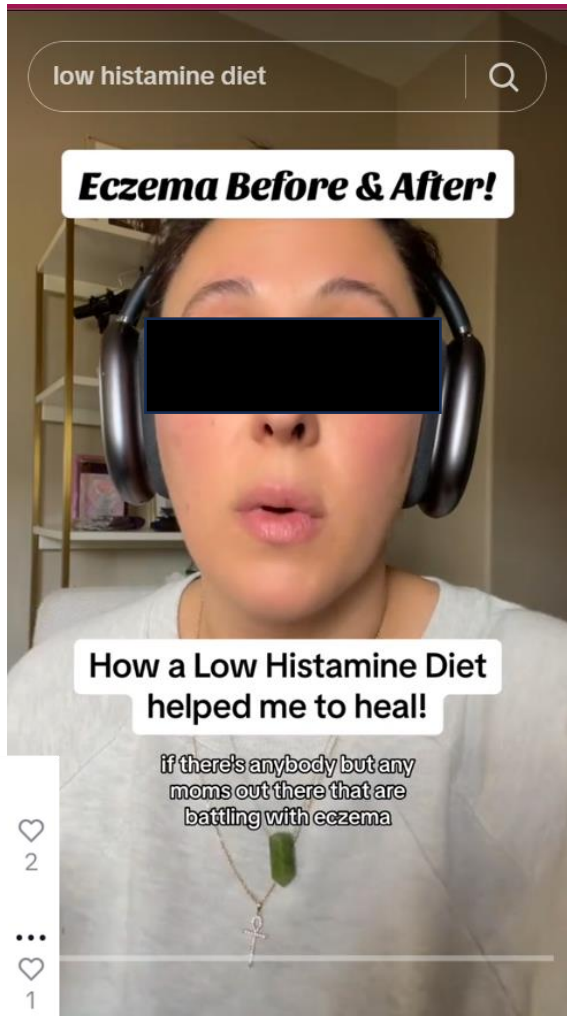
3-11 Reply



asiajae | mom content creator ·Creator

Well friend I can say it has helped my son TREMENDOUSLY better than anything prescribed by his dermatologist.. and I mean anything 🤔

3-11 Reply





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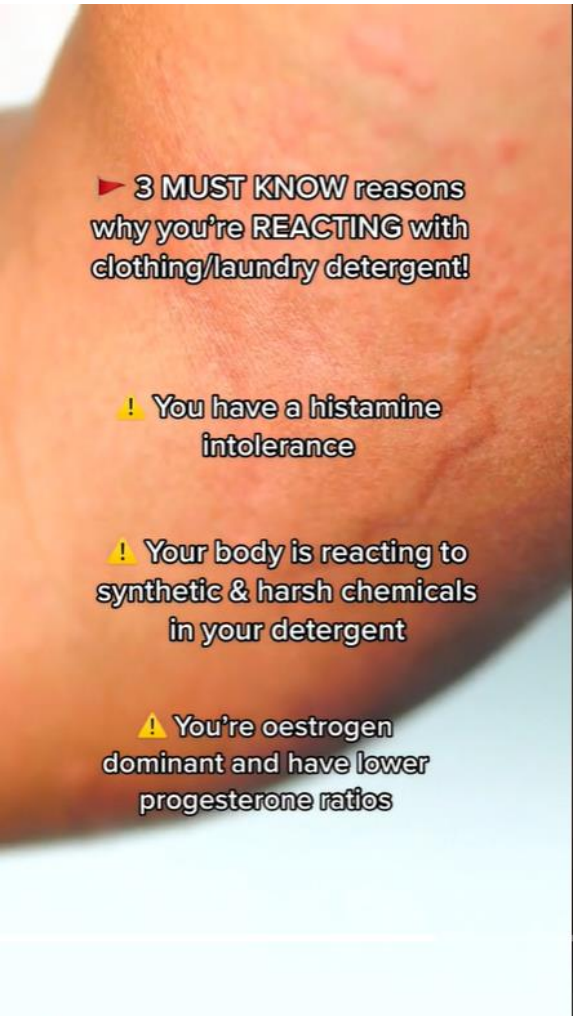
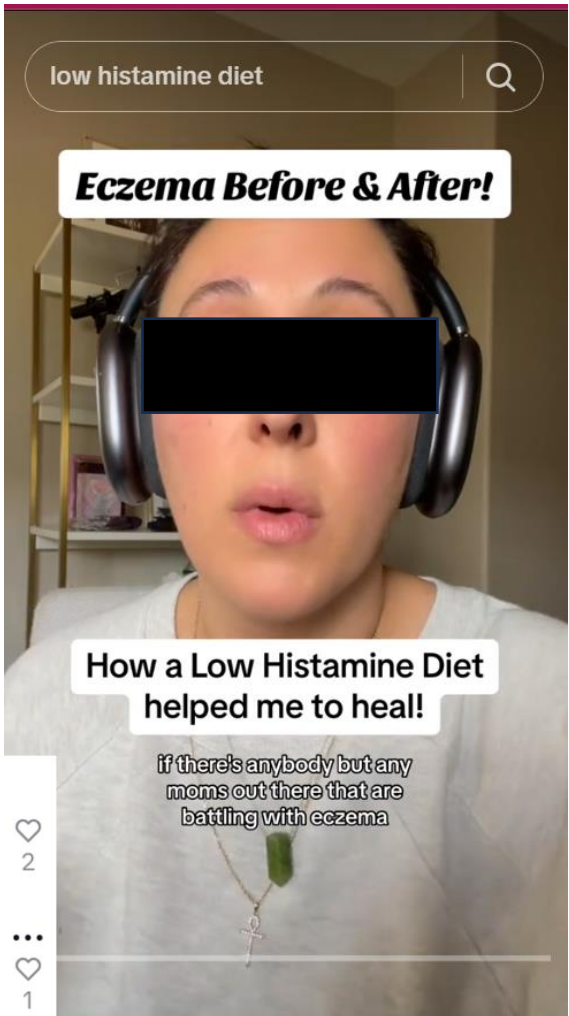
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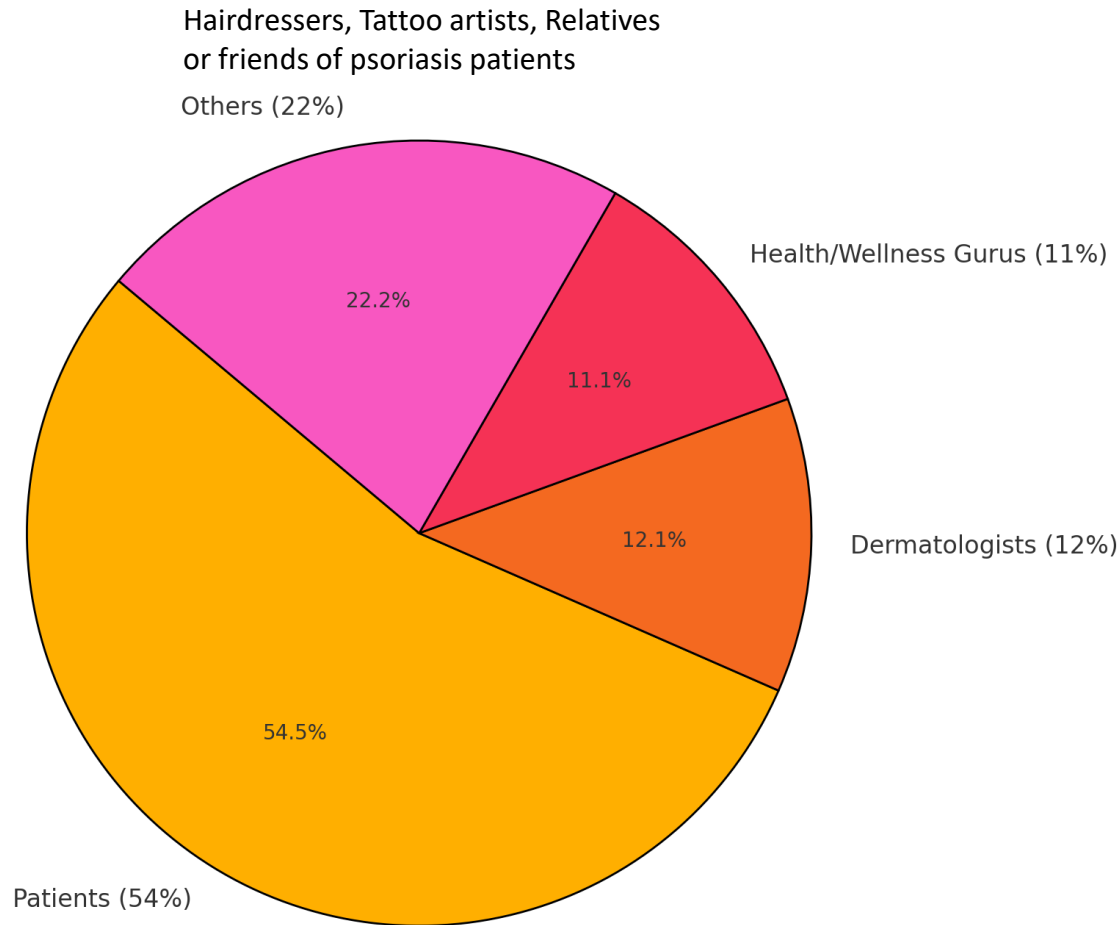


Case Study: Psoriasis on Tiktok

> [Skin Res Technol.](#) 2024 Jul;30(7):e13877. doi: 10.1111/srt.13877.

Descaling psoriasis narratives on TikTok: A cross-sectional study

- Analysis of first 200 videos on TikTok tagged **#Psoriasis**.
- Evaluated educational content as reliable/unreliable per NICE guidelines (CG153: "Psoriasis: Assessment and Management")



EDUCATIONAL CONTENT RELIABILITY:



Reliable (55%)

- 26 videos total
- **All 16 dermatologist videos** were reliable



Unreliable (45%)

- 21 videos total
- **13 out of 15** from wellness gurus were unreliable

- **PATIENT CENTRIC MISINFORMATION:**

- Most viral = plaque removal (49% patient videos, ~5 million likes).



- A highly misleading video claiming causal link between psoriasis and yeast in the body: **400K likes**.
- health/wellness gurus recommending **diet** over medications to treat psoriasis.





How many weeks does it take to heal psoriasis on the face when using manuka and Himalayan?

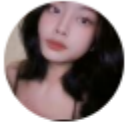
2024-5-... Reply



Translated using Google translator

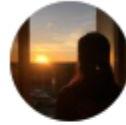


Translated using Google translator



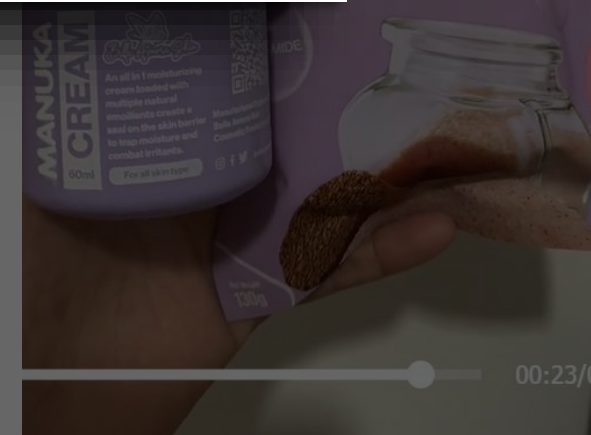
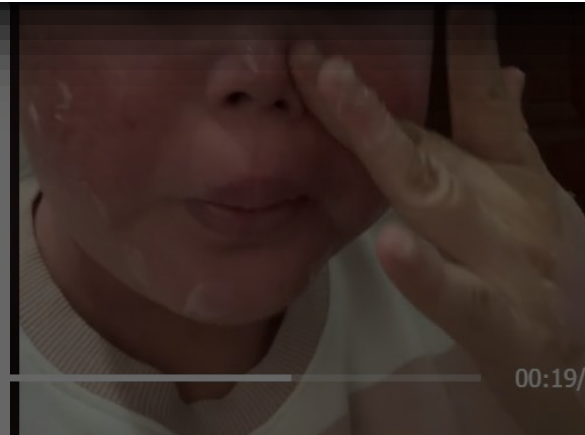
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2024-5-... Reply

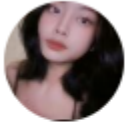


Hello sister, I just wanted to share. I've been using the third bottle of manuka cream and it seems to be getting worse 😞 I'm trying because I want to stop taking steroids.

2024-3... Reply



Translated using Google translator



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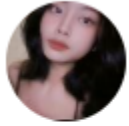
idk but am I the only one whose face and whole body hurt when I used the manuka cream and himalayan soap. my skin was so irritated 😬

3-20

Reply



Translated using Google translator



How many weeks does it take to heal psoriasis on the face when using manuka and Himalayan?

2024-5-... Reply



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2024-3... Reply



idk but am I the only one whose face and whole hurt when I used the manuka cream and yan soap. my skin was so irritated 😬



Reply





comb using a lice comb..then use a facial scrub then wash your face

1-2 Reply

What Happens If an Influencer Makes a ‘Drug Claim’?



-  **OK to say:** “*Supports skin health*” (Structure-function claim)
-  **Not OK to say:** “*Cures psoriasis*” — that’s a **drug claim**

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- Product becomes an unapproved drug
- FTC can take legal action
- Influencer/derminfluencer can be personally sued

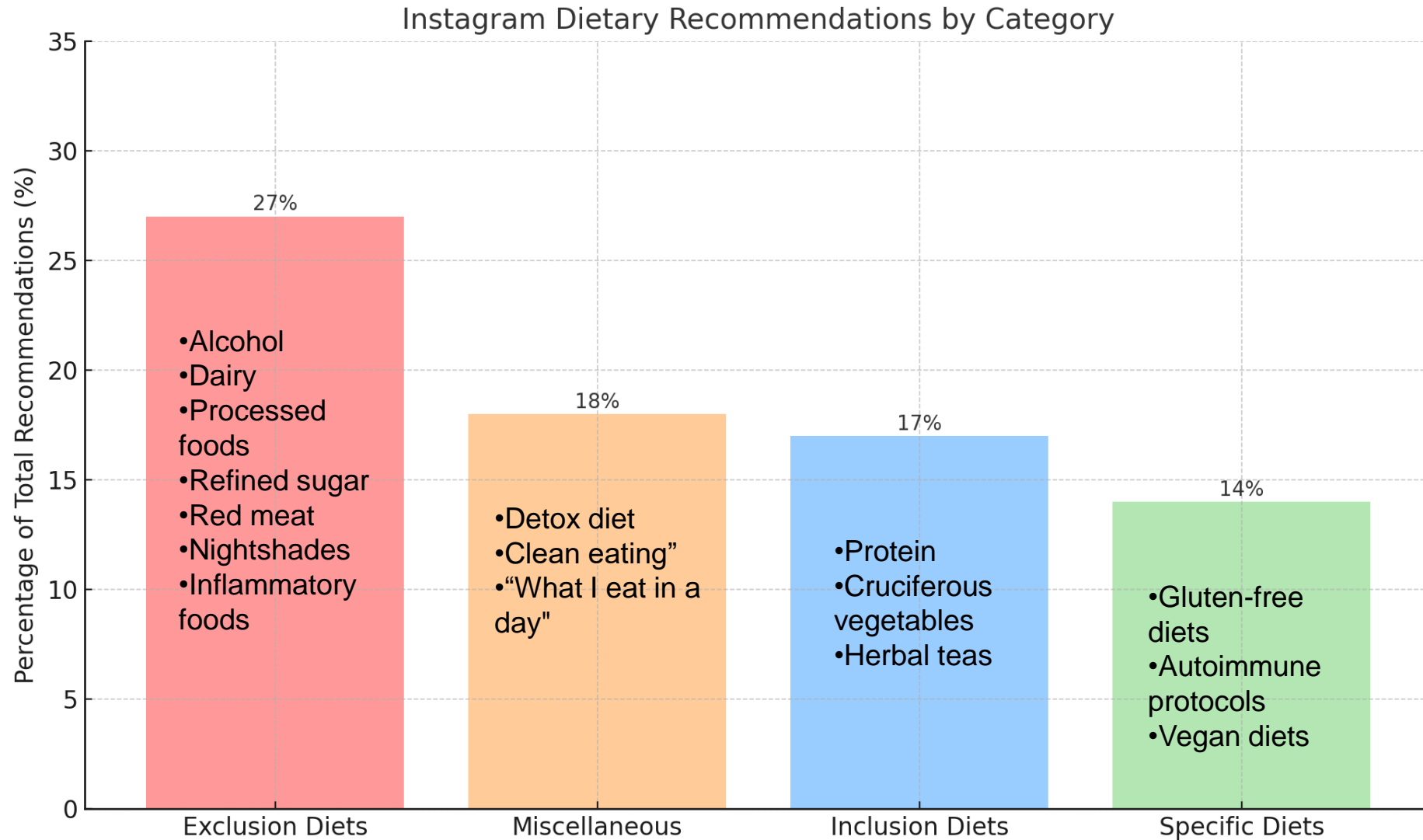
ORIGINAL ARTICLE |  Open Access |  

Diet and Psoriasis-Related Information on Instagram: A Quality and Content Analysis of Posts Under Popular Psoriasis Hashtags

Sabrina Cowan, Poppy Hawkins , Ghislaine Marks, Rosalind Fallaize

First published: 04 March 2025 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/jhn.70034>

- **99%** of Instagram posts were classified as **poor quality**.



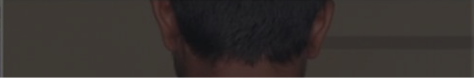


He came with a major complaints of chronic constipation ,leaky gut ,Psoriasis & fungal over growth .With simple dietray modifications and supplements there are visible changes in his over all symptoms .

His program is not yet done ,we would continue to work on his psoriasis and would keep you all updated

Before

After



Psoriasis gets better with anti inflammatory diet and supplements. Addressing the root cause of leaky gut can fix the skin issues like psoriasis, eczema

#psoriasis #leakygut
#functionalmedicine
#functionalnutrition

5w

Before

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#functionalnutrition

5w

Before

After



He came with a major complaints of chronic constipation ,leaky gut ,Psoriasis & fungal over growth .With simple dietray modifications and supplements there are visible changes in his over all symptoms .



Will leakygut leads to Autoimmune conditions like vitiligo also?

5w 1 like

Hide replies



@abilashkumark yes

4w

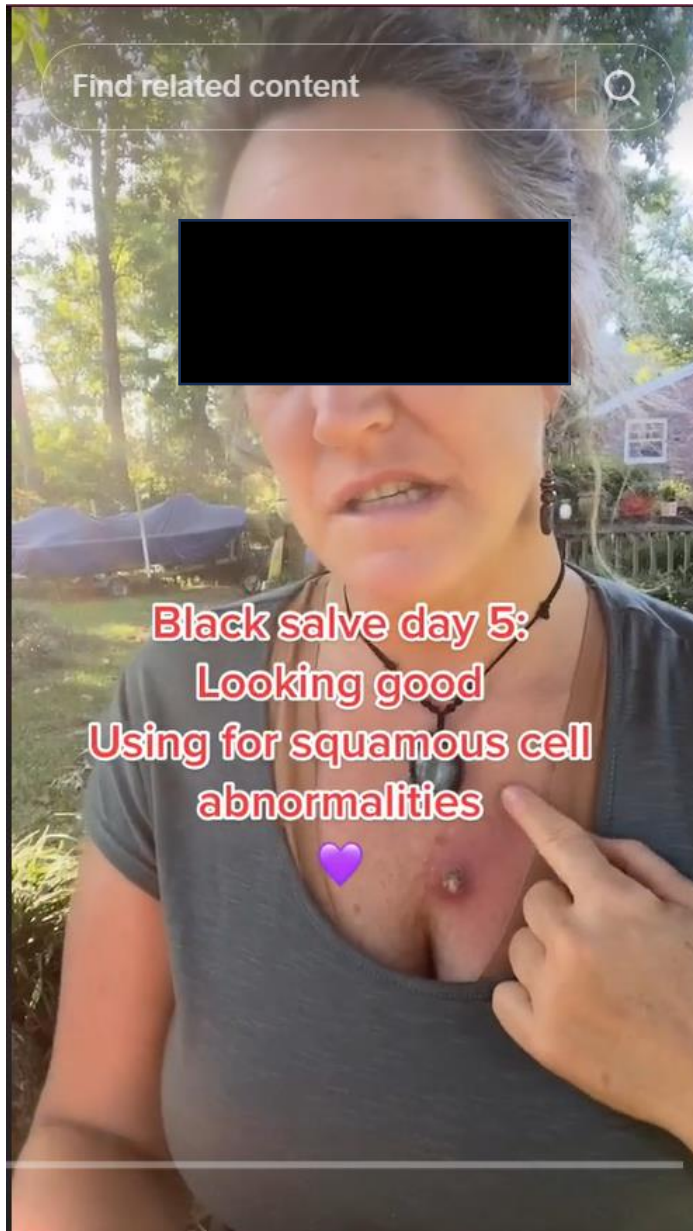


y Thank

Skin Cancers



Black Salve for cancers



Black Salve

Claims

- "it 'finds the cancer, pulls out only cancer cells, doesn't react to healthy skin cells."
- "It's a proven alternative to surgery/chemo/radio tx."
- "If it reacts, it means you had cancer there."
- "It can treat internal cancers too."
- "Eschar = cure."

Red Flag Language

- 1. “What your dermatologist won’t tell you...”
- 2. “Big Pharma doesn’t want you to know this cure.”
- 3. “Heals from the inside out.”
- 4. “Treat the root cause, not the symptom.”
- 5. “100% natural = 100% safe.”
- 6. “Clean, Chemical-free, toxin-free, risk-free.”
- 7. “Ancient remedy used for thousands of years.”
- 8. Buzz words: Detox, balance,
- 9. “You don’t need a diagnosis, you need a reset.”
- 10. “Everything starts in the gut.”
- 11. “Detox your liver.”
- 12. “You can’t heal skin until you clean your blood.”
- 13. “This herb/oil/salve was banned because it works.”

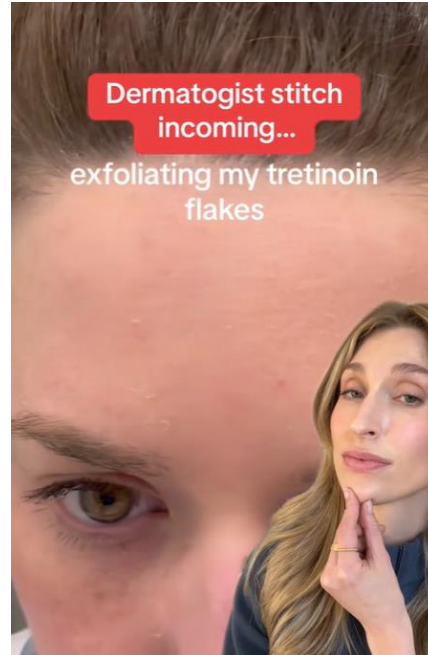
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Solutions?

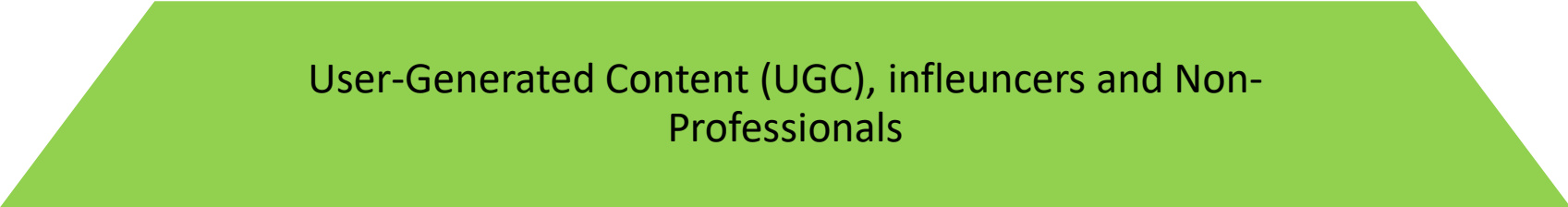


Stitch Videos



- A “stitch” is when you take part of someone’s video and add your own clip after it.
- Doctors and scientists are using this to fact-check, educate and debunk SM misinformation.

THE “STITCH” PYRAMID

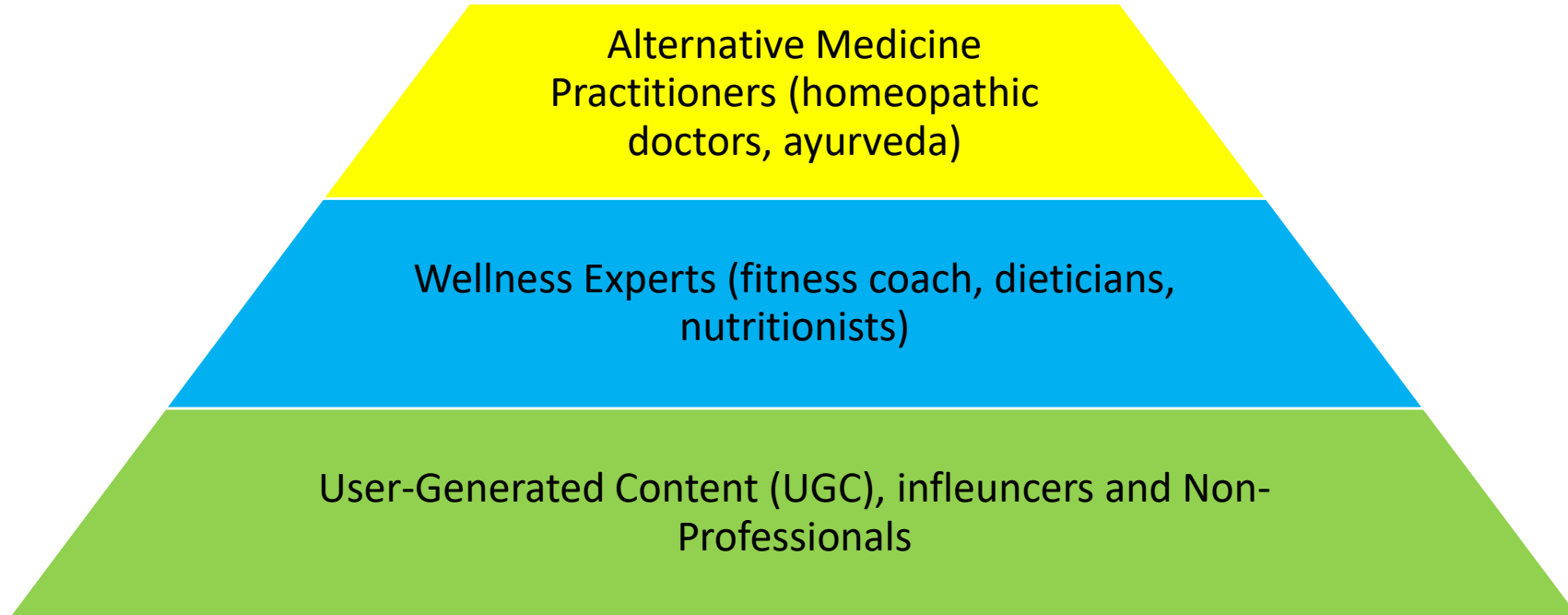


User-Generated Content (UGC), infleuncers and Non-Professionals

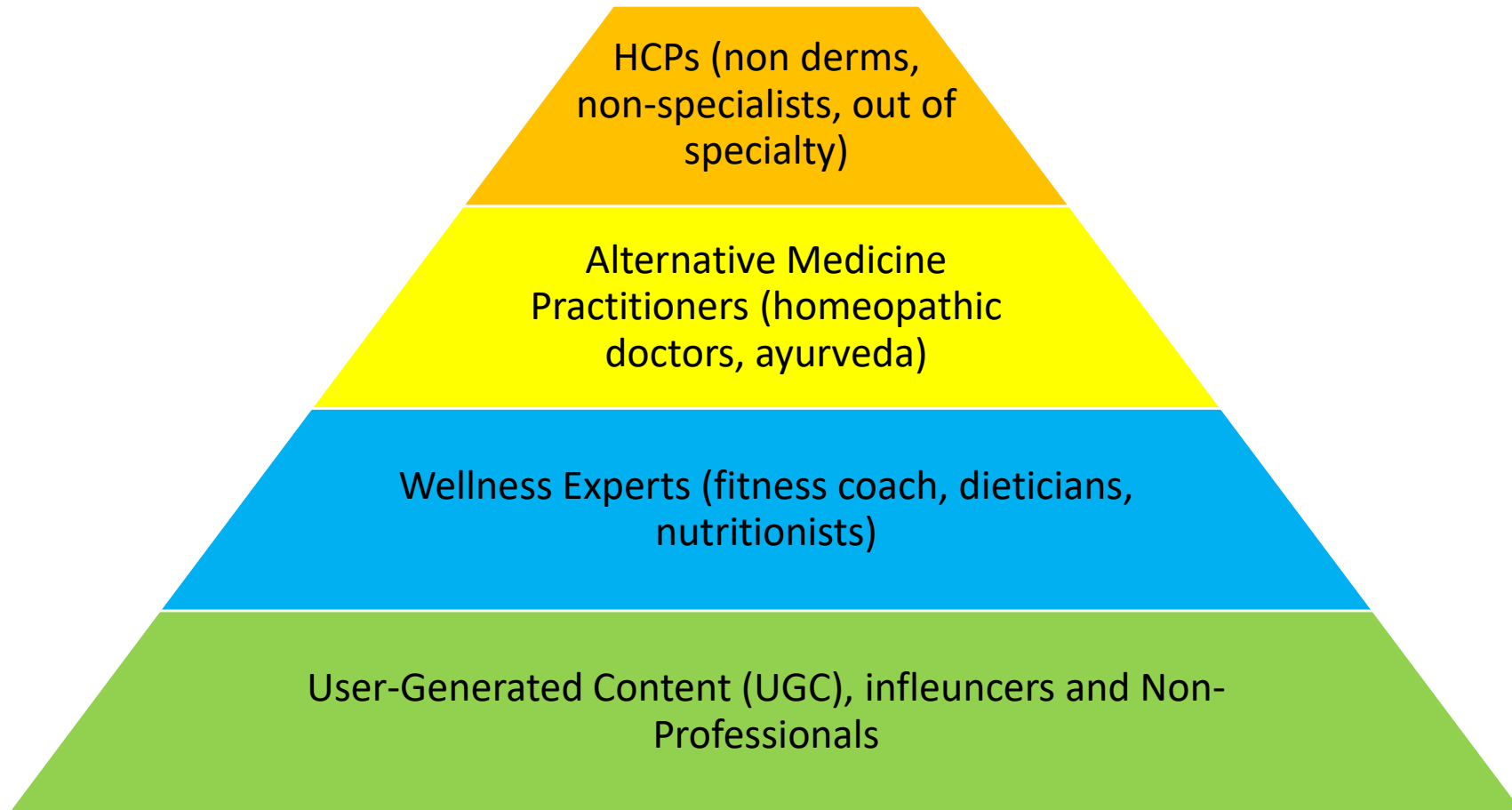
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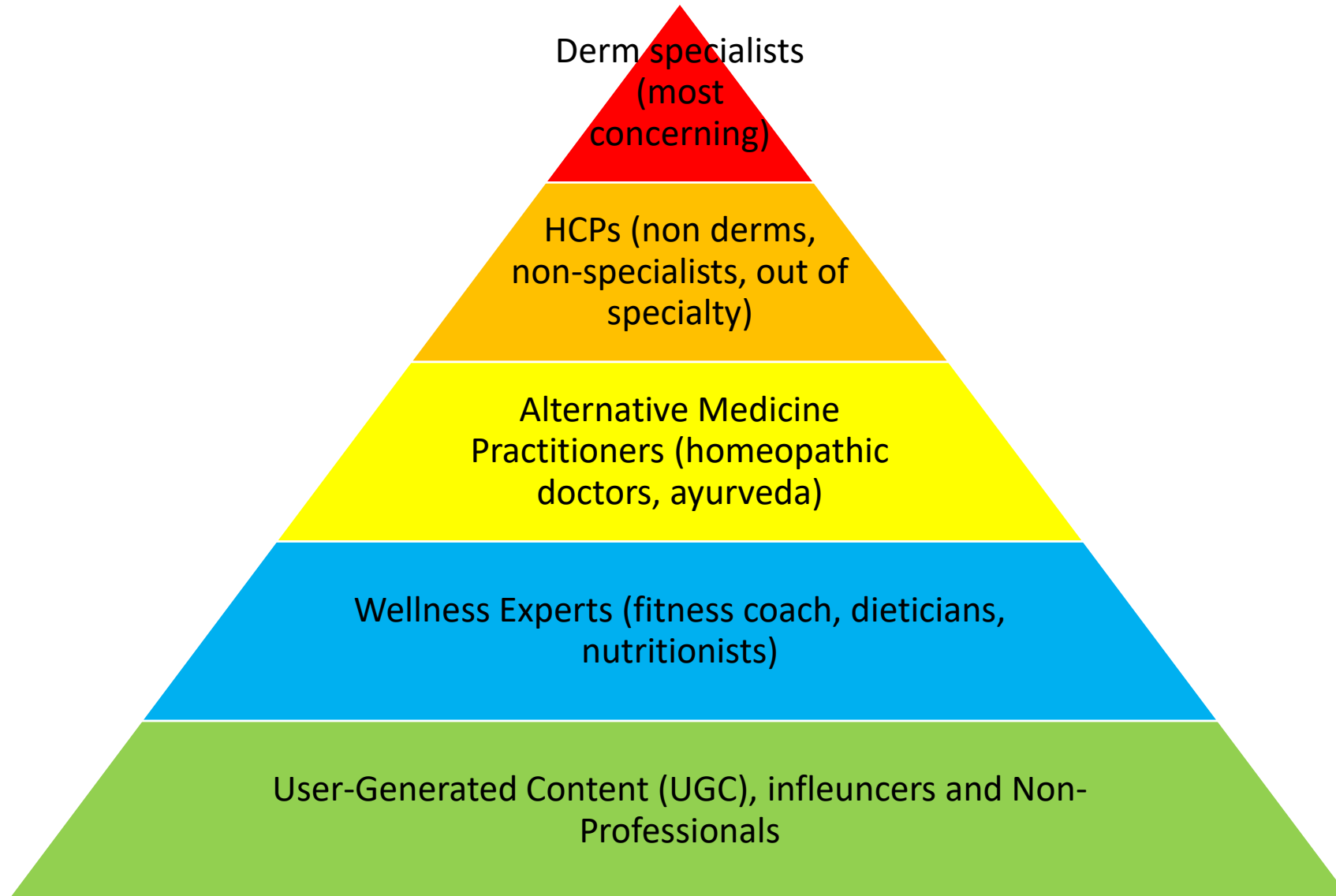
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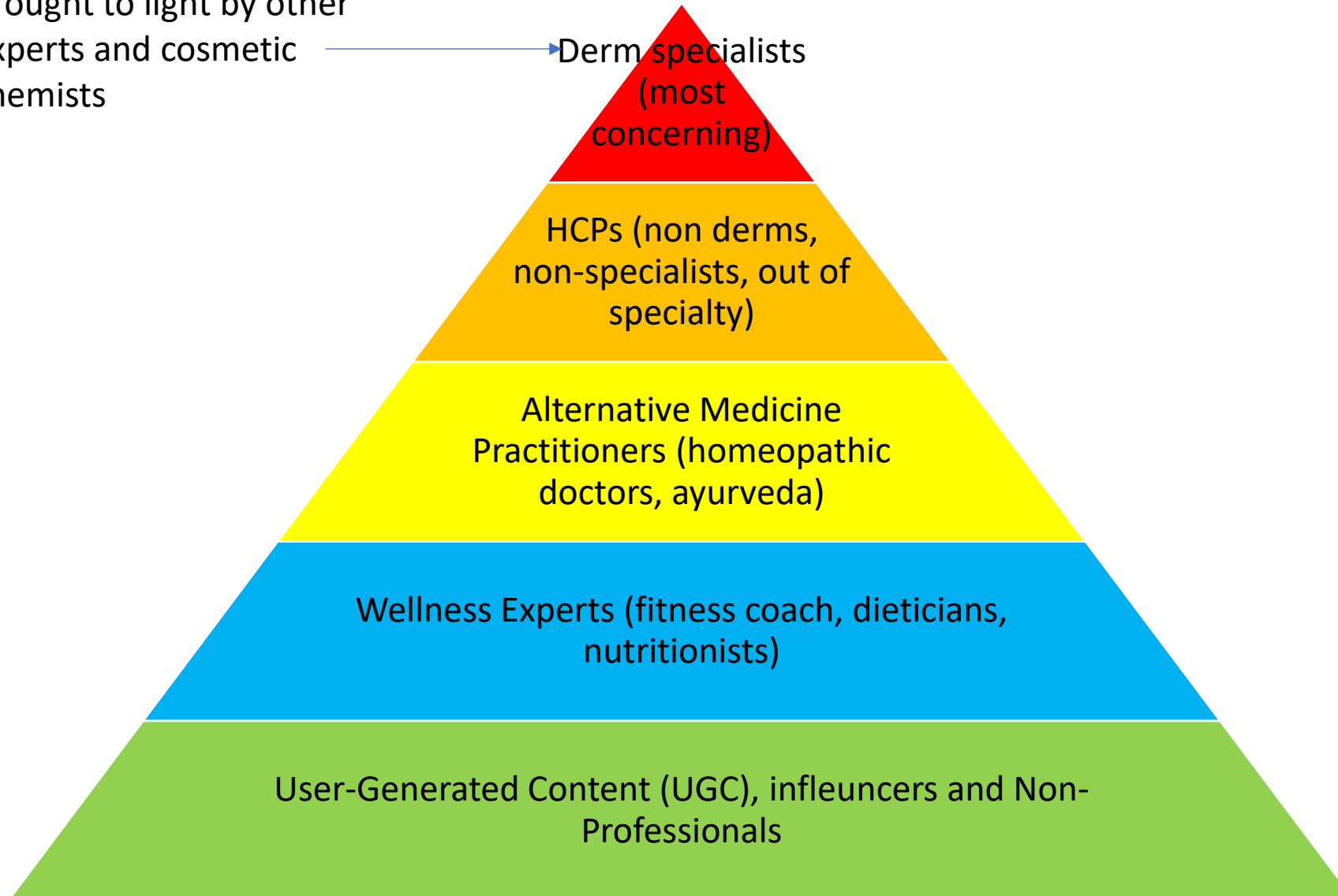


THE “STITCH” PYRAMID



THE “STITCH” PYRAMID

Brought to light by other
experts and cosmetic
chemists



THE “STITCH” PYRAMID

Brought to light by other experts and cosmetic chemists

→ Derm specialists
(most concerning)

HCPs (non derms,
non-specialists, out of
specialty)

Alternative Medicine
Practitioners (homeopathic
doctors, ayurveda)

Wellness Experts (fitness coach, dieticians,
nutritionists)

User-Generated Content (UGC), infleuncers and Non-Professionals

Cherry-picking Evidence:
Presenting selective data or studies out of context to support specific narratives.

Undisclosed ‘ads’ and ‘paid promotions.’

THE “STITCH” PYRAMID

Brought to light by other
experts and cosmetic
chemists

→ Dermatologists

THE GREATEST IMPOSTER

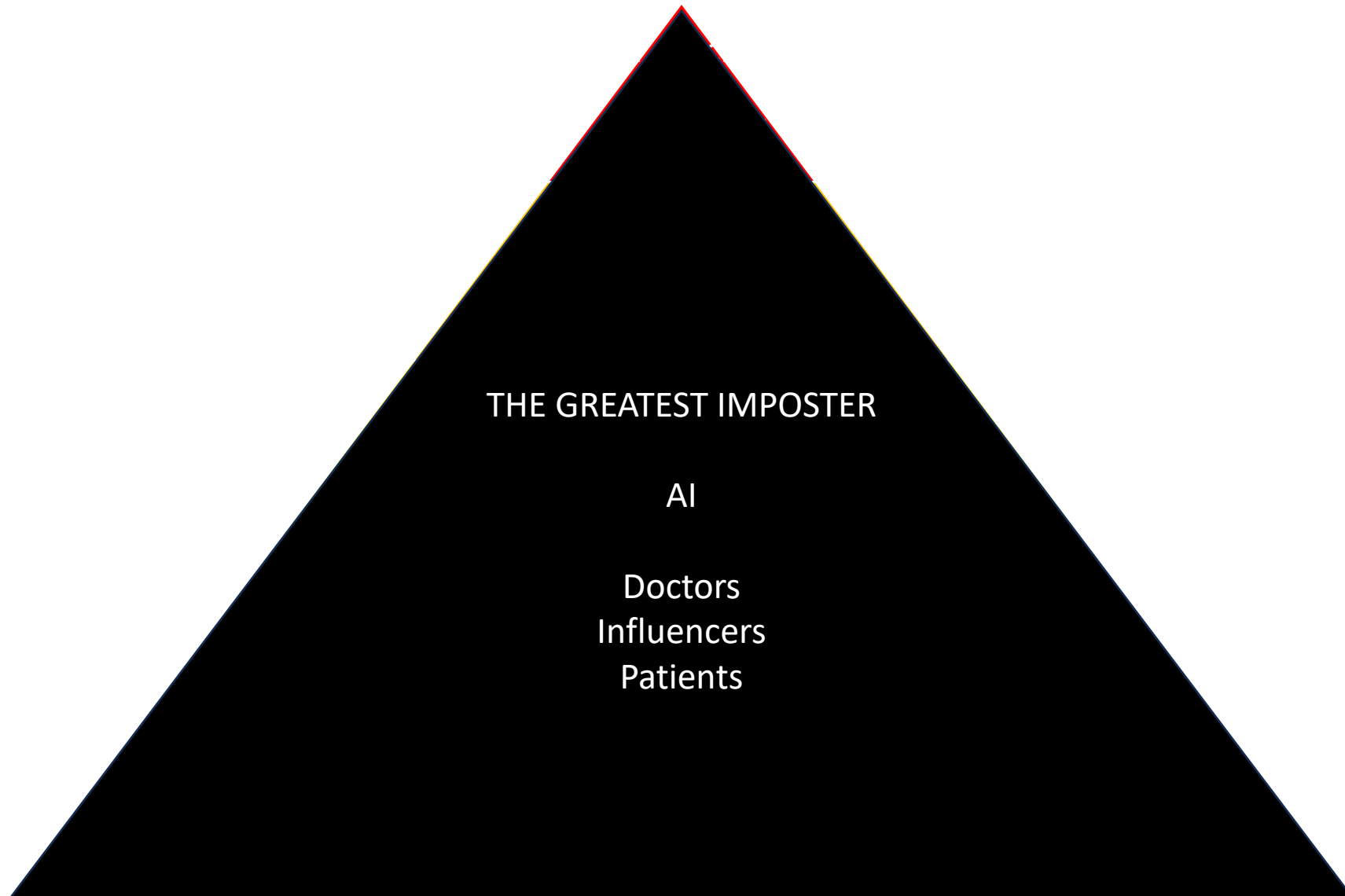
AI

Doctors
Influencers
Patients

Cherry-picking Evidence:
Presenting selective data or
studies out of context to
support specific narratives.

**Undisclosed ‘ads’ and ‘paid
promotions.’**

Generative AI tools to create deepfake videos





locks_health Locks Health

Follow

Message



5 Following 451.8K Followers 2.2M Likes

My Favorite Hair Growth Oil: SPOILD on Amazon

www.spoild.us/x

Videos

Liked

Latest

Popular

Oldest



Source: <https://www.aol.com/ai-generated-doctors-duping-tiktok-163532021.html>



lockshealth Locks Health

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Message



2 Following 366 Followers 1135 Likes

My Favorite Hair Growth Oil: SPOILD on Amazon 🌸

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Source: Tiktok.com
Account active as of 01-04-2025



lockshealth Locks Health

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Videos

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Latest

Popular

Oldest



Source: Tiktok.com
Account active as of 01-04-2025

- Calls himself a plastic surgeon with 13 years of experience.
- Claims: Ice water cures acne scars, 'snatches' jawline and reduces facial fat.
- Batana oil will reverse greying of hair and increase hair growth by 97%.



perlitac22

He said he is a dermatologist in another video.

3-18

Reply



0



Bes | Digital Marketing SAHM

Now this is confusing 🤔 is he a plastic surgeon or dematologist?

3-18

Reply



2

Call to Action

- Social media isn't the enemy; silence is.
- We have to meet our patients where they're listening.
- **WHO's "Stop the Spread" initiative** combats online health lies.

Call to Action

- Social media isn't the enemy; silence is.
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Thanks!



www.dralpana.com 

[@dralpanamohtaranka](https://www.instagram.com/dralpanamohtaranka) 

[Dr Alpana Mohta](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...) 

[@dralpanamohta](https://www.x.com/dralpanamohta) 