

Army Facial Hair Grooming Standards Update

References:

- AR 40-502 (Medical Readiness)
- AR 600-20 (Command Policy)
- AR 670-1 (Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia)
- TB MED 287 (Pseudofolliculitis of the Beard and Acne Keloidalis Nuchae)
- Army Directive 2025-13 (Facial Hair Grooming Standards)
- HQDA EXORD 263-25 (Implementation of Army Directive 2025-13)

Task:

- Provide instruction and information on best shaving practices ISO readiness.

Conditions / Standards:

- With instruction provided by Leaders at echelon, access to appropriate shaving products, and best advice provided by supporting medical teams, Soldiers will maintain a clean-shaven face IAW AD 2025-13. As needed, Soldiers with a medical condition will participate in a phased medical treatment plan to enable compliance with AD 2025-13 and HQDA EXORD 263-25.

What is Pseudofolliculitis of the Beard (PFB)?

References:

- TB MED 287 (Pseudofolliculitis of the Beard and Acne Keloidalis Nuchae)

PFB is a **common inflammatory condition of the face and neck caused by shaving in predisposed individuals with naturally curly hair**.

Papules, pustules, and nodules characterize this inflammatory reaction resulting from penetration of the outermost layer of skin by the tip of the growing curved hair.

Left untreated, chronic inflammation may form cysts, darkening of skin, keloids, and scarring.



What is Pseudofolliculitis of the Beard (PFB)?

Worsens PFB:

- Frayed ends of hair
- Dull blades, repeated shaving, dry shaving
- Clogged Pores
- Skin irritation and inflammation
- Not cleansing or exfoliating prior to shaving



Classes of PFB:

Mild (I): occasional papules, discomfort

Moderate (II): Frequent papules with pain and itching

Severe (III): widespread lesions with hyperpigmentation

Refractory (IV): persistent papules, scarring, keloids

Improves PFB:

- Regular cleansing and gentle exfoliation
- Reduced friction and irritation of follicle
 - Single blade
 - Shaving in direction of hair growth
 - Shaving habits
- Increased cell turnover
 - Use of retinols
- Reduced Inflammation
 - Topical anti-microbials

Shaving Best Practices



Direction of Growth:

- Can run fingers along stubble to feel
- Cheeks: Downwards towards jaw
- Neck: upwards or side to side
- Chin: Spiral/circular

Prior to Shaving:

- Warm shower or warm washcloth to face and neck x 5 minutes
- Wash face and neck with soap and washcloth
- 60 seconds of gentle circular motions, rinse and dry
- Gentle face wash if dry, flaking, itchiness
- Apply shaving cream, transparent types are best
- Additional hydration keeps hair soft and easier to cut
- Let shaving cream or gel sit for 3-5 minutes

Shaving:

- Single blade razor preferred
- Sharpen or replace every 5-7 shaves; clean and dry after use and inspect for rust, nicks, etc
- Electric razor likely to worsen symptoms
- **Short strokes in direction of hair growth**
- Rinse blade after each stroke to remove shaving cream and hair
- Do not shave the same area more than twice
- Do not pull or stretch the skin
- Can hold gentle pressure to reduce tugging

After Shaving:

- Apply topical clindamycin and benzoyl peroxide product over entire affected area
- Apply Over the Counter calming aftershave product
- Avoid alcohols, glycolic acid, salicylic acid
- Apply moisturizing lotion with SPF (for all skin shades)

Evening Routine:

- Cleanse face with benzoyl peroxide (or gentle soap) wash for 60 seconds
- Concentrations > 5% may bleach fabrics
- Washcloth with gentle, circular scrubbing motion on face and neck
- Dry face well
- Important for retinol (tretinoin) application
- Apply small amount of tretinoin to face and neck and rub in gently
- Follow with moisturizer
- On days tretinoin is not being used, apply topical clindamycin/benzoyl peroxide
- Follow with moisturizer

Consistency is key! Minimize inflammation and infection by shaving the right way every time! Preventing PFB symptoms is more effective than managing them!

Shaving Best Practices – Online Resources

▪ YouTube Videos- Shaving Tips



▪ Podcasts

The Retro shaving Podcast



Worst Shaving Podcast Ever



▪ YouTube Videos

- <https://youtu.be/oPtWFC-uasU?si=WIZ-fstfJN62dNxu>
- https://youtu.be/U08KUVCWITk?si=qVdAOC3_IXNxKv3Z
- https://youtu.be/BhsYC2X8Uvg?si=Le8e5GC9vkF_1JIG

▪ Podcasts

- The Retro Wet Shaving Podcast:
<https://open.spotify.com/show/3TxqF3wX1yWBJ8GtTY8Eti>
- Worst Shaving Podcast ever:
<https://open.spotify.com/show/13drYPj5DGGI7hsiZrtQli?si=87695167cc62474b>
- LatherTalk- A Wet Shaving Podcast:
<https://open.spotify.com/show/3sRTtgCciBj46He8tlBPI4?si=c84d664d6b694597>
- The After Shave: <https://open.spotify.com/show/1fMyl9XJySwv7rxfZGBrT7?si=4ed40d42aa964a16>

Phase 2 Shaving Instructions

Prior to Shaving:

- Warm shower or warm washcloth to face and neck for 5 minutes
- Wash face and neck with soap and washcloth
 - o 60 seconds of gentle circular motions, rinse and dry
- Apply shaving cream and let sit 3-5 minutes

Shaving:

- Shave with sharp, single blade razor (sharpen or replace after every 5-7 shaves)
 - o Multiple blade razors increase risk of ingrown hair
 - o Electric razor an option; maintain sharp blade
- Take short strokes in direction of hair growth (as much as possible)
- Maximum two passes over each area
- Rinse razor after each stroke
- Do not pull or stretch the skin; can hold gentle pressure to reduce friction

After Shaving:

- Apply topical clindamycin/benzoyl peroxide solution with clean hands
- Consider gentle, calming aftershave product (avoid glycolic acid, AHA/BHA, salicylic acid, benzoyl peroxide if skin is dry or sensitive)
- Apply moisturizing lotion with SPF (required for all skin shades!)

Evening Routine:

- Cleanse face with gentle face wash (60sec application)
- 1 minute of gentle circular motions with washcloth on face and neck
- Dry face well
- Apply small amount of tretinoin to face and neck (increase frequency as directed)
- On nights when tretinoin is NOT being used, apply clindamycin/benzoyl peroxide
- Apply moisturizing lotion generously

Topical Retinols:

- Start with every other day application, then increase to daily over 2-4 weeks.
- Skin may become dry, more sensitive to the sun, or sensitive. If this occurs, *reduce* use for one week and then increase again.
- You may notice an increase in acne. This is normal and improves after 2-6 weeks

You will be placed on a 60 day no-shave profile. The day before your appointment, please shave in the manner described above.

Product Examples

Cetaphil Gentle Skin Cleanser

Vanicream Gentle Skin Cleanser

Cerave Hydrating Facial Cleanser

Aveeno Calm and Restore Nourishing Oat Cleanser

La Roche-Posay Gentle Face Cleanser

Every Man Jack Daily Face Cleanser

Neutrogena Hydroboost Cleanser

Neutrogena ultra gentle daily cleanser

Harry's Shave Cream

Dollar Shave Club Shave Butter

Vanicream Shave Cream

Proraso Shave Cream

Cremo Shaving Cream for Men

Burt's Bees Shaving Cream

Aveeno Therapeutic Shaving Cream

Neutrogena Oil-Free Shaving Cream

Every Man Jack Beard and Face recovery lotion

CeraVe Ultra-Light moisturizing Lotion

Cetaphil Daily oil-free hydration lotion

CeraVe moisturizing Cream

Neutrogena Hydroboost

Aveeno Daily Moisturizing Lotion

Neutrogena Clear Face Sunscreen

Neutrogena Ultra-Sheer Dry Touch

La Roche-Posay

Dove Men Hydrate SPF

Cerave Sunscreen