

Topical Retinoid

Medication Information Leaflet

What is this medication for?

Your doctor has prescribed the following medication:

- Adapalene
- Tretinoïn

Topical adapalene or tretinoïn can be applied to the skin to treat acne.

This medication works by reducing inflammation and clearing blocked pores. It may also be used for other conditions as determined by your doctor.

How should I use this medication?

- Wash the skin with cleanser, then rinse and pat dry
- Wash your hands before and after applying the medication.
- Apply a thin layer of medication to cover the affected areas according to your doctor's instructions.
- If you are using this preparation for the first time, start with applying on a small area of affected part and increase gradually to other areas over the following week if there is no skin irritation. Alternatively, start by using every other day for the first 2 weeks, then apply daily.
- Avoid applying the medication on broken skin or too near to your eyes, mouth and nose as it may cause irritation.
- Flush the area thoroughly with water if the medication accidentally gets into your eyes, mouth, and nose.

What should I do if I forget to use this medication?

If you forgot to apply a dose of this medication, apply it as soon as you remember. Skip the dose if it is time for the next dose. Apply your next dose at the usual time. Do not apply two doses to make up for the missed dose.

What precautions should I take?

Inform your healthcare professional if:

- You are allergic to this medication or any of the other ingredients of this medication
- You are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding

Avoid washing your face too often as this may increase the drying-out effect of your medication. Wash your face two to three times a day only.

Unless otherwise directed by your doctor, avoid using other “drying” preparations on the same treated areas to prevent severe irritations. These include harsh soaps and cleansers, alcoholic preparations and medicated cosmetics or soaps.

Avoid staying directly under sunlight for long durations. Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen product with Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 30 and wear protective clothing when you are exposed to direct sunlight.

Avoid applying heavy make-up and using oily cosmetics. It is recommended to choose make-up products with non-oily formulas.

What are some common side-effects of this medication?

- Initially, you may experience peeling of the skin, with redness and even a mild stinging sensation. If you experience bad irritation, apply it less frequently.
- Sometimes, your acne may seem to get worse during the first two to three weeks. This is a normal reaction. If you continue using this medicine, you will notice improvement. The best results may be achieved after four to seven weeks of treatment.

What are some rare but serious side-effects that I need to seek medical advice immediately?

If you experience any of the following side effects, please consult your doctor immediately:

- Burning
- Blistering
- Crusting
- Itch
- Swelling

What food or medication should I avoid when I use this medication?

Do not apply benzoyl peroxide together at the same time as topical tretinoin as it will reduce the effectiveness of topical tretinoin.

How should I store this medication?

Store in a cool and dry place, away from direct sunlight. Keep this medication away from children.

How should I throw away this medication safely?

Pack this medication into a black trash bag and seal it tightly before throwing into the rubbish chute or bin.

Disclaimers

If you take more than the recommended dose, please seek medical advice immediately. The information provided on this page does not replace information from your healthcare professional. Please consult your healthcare professional for more information.

This article is jointly developed by members of the National Medication Information workgroup. The workgroup consists of cluster partners (National Healthcare Group, National University Health System and SingHealth), community pharmacies (Guardian, Unity and Watsons) and Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore.

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