

Malathion

Medication Information Leaflet

What is this medication for?

This medication is used for treatment of lice and scabies infestation. Malathion kills the lice and mites. This prevents the condition from getting worse.

How should I take/use this medication?

This medication should be applied on your skin or scalp only. For external use only.

For scabies infestation

- Take a warm bath and dry well, then apply this medication to the skin surface of the whole body from the neck down.
- For children below 2 years old, carefully apply a thin layer of this medication on the scalp, face, neck and ears. Avoid applying near the eyes and mouth.
- Ensure that the medication is also applied on the navel, between the toes and fingers, wrists, armpit area, genital area, buttocks, and any other body creases and folds.
- Leave some of the medication under the fingernails and toenails.
- Rub in well and allow the medication to dry naturally. Do not use a hair dryer to dry the medication as it may reduce the effectiveness of this medication.
- Put on fresh clothing after application.
- Do not bathe or wash the medication away for **24 hours**. Reapply if the medication is washed off from the hands or other body parts.
- After 24 hours of application, use soap and water to wash off the medication.

For head lice infestation

- Do not wash hair before using this medication. If your hair has been submerged in a chlorinated pool during the last 3 days, wash and dry your hair thoroughly before starting treatment.
- Apply this medication to dry hair and scalp until they are thoroughly wet, including the back of your ears, head and neck.
- Allow the hair to dry naturally for **at least 12 hours**.
- Do not use electrical heat sources such as hair dryers to dry the hair as it may reduce the effectiveness of this medication.
- Wash your hands immediately after the application process.

- Wait at least 12 hours after applying the medication before you wash it off with shampoo
- Rinse your hair thoroughly and comb wet hair with a fine-tooth nit comb to remove dead lice and eggs.
- Repeat the use of this medication 7 days later if there are any lice alive after using this medication.

What precautions should I take?

- Do not use more than once a week for three weeks at a time.
- Do not use more than what is recommended by your doctor.
- Do not apply on broken skin.
- If this medication accidentally gets into your eyes, rinse with water thoroughly. If irritation of the eyes persists, see a doctor immediately.
- As this medication is flammable, keep this medication and wet treated hair away from electrical heat sources, cigarettes and open flames.
- To avoid reinfestation and spreading of lice to other people:
 - Head-to-head contact during play and other activities should be avoided.
 - Do not share combs, brushes, towels and clothing.
 - Combs and brushes should be soaked in hot water for 5-10 minutes.
 - Wash all bedsheets, pillowcases, recently worn clothing (in the past 2 days before treatment) in hot water and dry under direct sunlight or in a hot cycle dryer. Items that cannot be washed should be sealed in plastic bags for 2 weeks.
 - Vacuum the floor and furniture, especially the area where the infested person sat or lay.
- To avoid reinfestation and spreading of mites to other people:
 - Avoid direct skin-to-skin contact with an infested person or with items used by an infested person.
 - Wash all bedsheets, pillowcases, recently worn clothing (in the past 3 days before treatment) in hot water and dry under direct sunlight or in hot cycle dryer. Items that cannot be washed should be sealed in plastic bags for at least 3 days to 1 week.
- 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.

What are some common side-effects of this medication?

Possible side effects include:

- Unpleasant smell
- Skin irritation

If any of the side effects do not go away or are serious, please see your doctor.

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

- Burns
- Symptoms of a drug allergy:
 - Swollen face/eyes/lips/tongue
 - Difficulty in breathing
 - Itchy skin rashes over your whole body

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should stop your medication and see your healthcare professional immediately.

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

Inform your healthcare professional if you are taking any other medications, including supplements, traditional medications and herbal remedies.

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. The content does not reflect drug availability and supply information in pharmacies and healthcare institutions. You are advised to check with the respective institutions for such information.

Last updated on Apr 2021