

## Topical Fluorouracil Instructions

Fluorouracil is the active ingredient in Efudex, Carac and the compound 5-fluorouracil/calcipotriene. It is commonly used in dermatology to treat actinic keratosis (a.k.a. precancers) on the skin. Fluorouracil specifically reacts to abnormal or rapidly growing cells on the skin while allowing normal skin to survive.

The most important thing to know about this treatment is that application *will* become inflamed and needs to become inflamed in order the medication to work. The fluorouracil on its own will typically take about a week to start reacting and the compounded fluorouracil/calcipotriene will typically react after 3-4 days. You can expect any resulting redness, sensitivity or slight crusting to worsen for 3 days after you finish your treatment course. It then takes about 7-14 days to resolve. Because of this, you should carefully consider your social and/or business obligations when starting this treatment.

## Application Instructions

Fluorouracil/calcipotriene compound: Apply thin layer to: \_\_\_\_\_ twice daily for \_\_\_\_\_ days.

5-Fluorouracil or Efudex: Apply thin layer to: \_\_\_\_\_ twice daily for \_\_\_\_\_ weeks.

If areas become crusted and scab, apply Vaseline liberally to those areas. If the areas are extremely red, sore, or tender, it is OK to skip a day. To relieve red, sore, or tender areas, you may choose to apply over-the-counter hydrocortisone 1% *ointment* and/or take anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen.

Important things to note:

- This medicine is not intended for "spot treatment" (unless very specifically instructed by your prescriber). Do not dab the medicine on crusted or scaly areas exclusively as this application approach may cause hidden areas of sun damage to be missed. Apply a thin layer of the medicine to the entire area being treated.
- If treating your nose, apply a barrier like Vaseline to your nasal folds prior to the medicine as it tends to pool in those folds and cause irritation. Same around mouth and eyes.
- Although not required, you can apply the medicine with a metal applicator or a thin glove. It is acceptable to apply with your finger, but be sure to wash your hands thoroughly after you are finished.
- It is acceptable to wear makeup over the medicine, but wait for 30 minutes before applying makeup to treated skin. Wait 3 hours before washing your face after application.
- Application of fluorouracil to areas of skin with actinic damage will result in redness, and sometimes itching, irritation, or crusting (scab formation). Do not pick at scabs or crusts.
- Avoid exposing treatment areas to prolonged direct sunlight.
- Covering the treatment sites with a bandage will create a stronger reaction and should be avoided
- The goal with the medication is to create a reaction on the skin, however, if you feel the reaction is too strong or uncomfortable, discontinue treatment and contact your prescriber.