

Efudex

What is Efudex (5-fluorouracil)?

Efudex is a topical chemotherapy treatment that is used to eliminate pre-cancerous and cancerous cells from the skin. It has been shown to be one of the most effective field treatments for actinic keratoses (pre-cancers).

Directions for Use

From your pharmacy:

- Apply to affected areas **twice daily for 2 weeks** or as instructed by your provider.

From Skin Medicinals (mail-in pharmacy):

- Apply to affected areas **twice daily for 5-7 days as instructed by your provider.**

How to Apply

- Apply a thin layer of the cream to all affected areas using your fingers or a Q-tip.
- Avoid the eyelids and the corners of the mouth.
- If the medication accidentally gets into the eyes, wash out thoroughly with clean water.
- Wash your hands well with soap and water after application.

Amount to Apply

Follow these general guidelines unless otherwise instructed by your provider.

- **Full Face:** 4 pea sized amounts – 1 on the chin, 1 on the forehead, 1 on each cheek
- **Lip:** ½ - 1 pea sized amount on lower lip
- **Chest:** 5 pea sized amounts spread over full chest
- **Forearms:** 3 pea sized amounts for each forearm
- **Hands:** 1 pea sized amount for each hand

Expectations

- Skin changes that are evidence that pre-cancerous and cancerous are being treated include:
 - Development of scaling, itching, mild pain, or tenderness to touch.
 - Small breaks in the skin (erosions).
 - Lips may blister.
- Most people find that their skin begins to react to the medication around 3-5 days after beginning application.
- The inflammation produced by the Efudex application generally resolves within 2-4 weeks of finishing the treatment.

- People with more extensive sun damage may have a stronger reaction to the medication.
- Generally areas which are treated with Efudex may have a less severe reaction when treated again with Efudex at a later date.

Tips

- Applying moisturizing cream or ointment (Vaseline or Aquaphor) to the affected areas throughout the day often provides a soothing effect.
- It is important to wash off all products before each application of Efudex.
- Recommend staying indoors while undergoing Efudex reaction as your skin may be very sensitive to sun and heat exposure.
- Sunscreen can be applied to affected areas during treatment.
- We recommend planning for a follow-up 1 month after completing treatment for further evaluation and management.

5-Fluorouracil from Skin Medicinals

Skin Medicinals is a compounding pharmacy which will ship your prescription directly to your home. They are a cash only pharmacy. However if you call their support line they can provide you with the documentation needed to try to get reimbursement from your insurance.

Expiration Date for Skin Medicinals 5-Fluorouracil

- When you receive your 5-fluorouracil through Skin Medicinals note that there is a Beyond-Use Date of 30 days after receipt of the medication.
- We recommend waiting to have the medication shipped until you are ready to begin and finish your full course of treatment within 30 days of receiving the medication.

For any questions or concerns, call our office at (805) 770-3999.

Patient Specific Instructions: