



## 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:**  $\frac{1}{2}$  - 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.

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- 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:**