



Actinic keratoses (AK) are precancerous lesions from sun damage. Untreated, there is a small risk of AKs becoming squamous cell cancers (SCC). The risk of any one AK becoming an SCC varies from 1/1000 (0.1%) to 1/5 (20%). You have been prescribed a cream to treat your precancers. A little cream goes a long way. It is important to never let the treated areas form scabs or be dry or crusty. Always moisten the treated areas with petrolatum ointment (Aquaphor or Vaseline) several times during the day.

<p>Efudex (5-Fluorouracil 5%) Apply to areas twice daily (in the morning and 2 hours before bedtime) for 4 weeks.</p> <p>Carac (5-Fluorouracil 0.5%) Apply to areas 2 hours before bedtime every day for 4 weeks.</p>	<p>Aldara (imiquimod 5%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Apply to skin 2 hours before bedtime 3 times a week (Monday, Wednesday, Friday) x 16 weeks. (WARTS)<input type="checkbox"/> Apply to areas 2 hours before bedtime twice a week x 16 wks. (AK, Precancers)<input type="checkbox"/> Apply to areas plus half inch margin, 2 hours before bedtime Monday through Friday x 6 weeks
<p>Picato (ingenol mebutate 0.015%, 0.05% gel)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Apply to <u>facial</u> areas daily x 3 days (0.015%)<input type="checkbox"/> Apply to areas on <u>trunk and extremities</u> daily x 2 days (0.05%)	<p>Zyclara (imiquimod 3.75%) Apply to areas daily x 2 wks, rest for 2 wks, and reapply daily x 2 wks. (2 wks on, 2 wks off, 2 wks on)</p>



Inflammation of AKs during treatment. Note sparing of normal skin

Redness fades gradually after treatment

During treatment, **inflammation, redness, and mild swelling** can be seen. Do not be surprised if many lesions "light up". The cream is selective and **only precancerous lesions should respond**. To avoid excessive irritation and discomfort:

Wash your face in the morning and generously apply petrolatum ointment (Aquaphor, Vaseline) to the treated areas. Use a clean applicator each time to avoid contaminating the jar.

Re-apply petrolatum ointment several times daily (3-6x daily) to keep your skin moist and slightly greasy. The more moist your skin, the better it will feel.

Do not allow crusting and scabbing to occur. If you develop crusting, use vinegar soaks (1 part white vinegar To 4 to 6 parts clean water) to gently remove the crusts or place a gauze over the crusting and allow warm shower water to gently remove the crust. Do not apply the prescription cream to broken skin.

If you have pus discharge, pain, or fever (>101° F), please call our office as there may be an infection.

When using an imiquimod cream (Aldara, Zyclara), you may have flu-like symptoms (low-grade fever < 101° F, chills, body aches) if the reaction is significant. Over-the-counter ibuprofen or Tylenol will help. Do not exceed daily dosage recommendations for these medications.

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INSTRUCTIONS for Tretinoin & CARAC/ALDARA Combination Therapy

You have been prescribed a 6 week treatment plan that combines Tretinoin and either Carac or Aldara for the treatment of your skin lesions. The Tretinoin is designed to prime your skin and increase its absorption of either Carac or Aldara. This combination regimen is very effective but may potentially result in significant inflammation, irritation, and even ulceration of precancerous lesions. As a result, it is very important to follow these instructions precisely and to contact your doctor if you have any questions or concerns. You should have the following prescriptions before you leave your doctor's office:

1. Tretinoin 0.025% cream
2. A prescription for either Carac or Aldara cream
3. Biafine emulsion
4. Bactroban cream
5. some patients may be prescribed an antibiotic by mouth (notify your doctor if you are allergic to any medication)

FOR 2 WEEKS:

Apply tretinoin cream at nighttime for two weeks by itself.

FOR the next 2 WEEKS:

Apply tretinoin cream with Carac or Aldara cream for two weeks at nighttime. Separate the application of both creams by at least several hours.

If your doctor prescribed you oral antibiotics, then start the antibiotics at this phase of treatment. Not every patient will require antibiotics

FOR the next 4 WEEKS:

Apply Carac or Aldara cream by itself at nighttime for four weeks.

WOUND CARE DURING COMBINATION THERAPY

You must start the wound care below on the first day that you start the tretinoin. Do not wait until redness and irritation develops before starting the wound care. The idea is to start wound care early enough to prevent or minimize irritation.

Beginning the first day of treatment, starting in the morning- wash off any creams that was applied at night by taking a shower. After patting dry (do not scrub dry), perform the following:

1. **On EVEN days-**Apply Aquaphor ointment 3-5 times daily, or as often as needed to keep the skin greased and moisturized.
2. **On ODD days-** Apply Bactroban cream alternating with Biafine emulsion 3-5 times daily, or as often as needed to keep the skin greased and moisturized.
3. Use vinegar soaks to clean the skin 2-3 times daily as needed. Vinegar soaks consists of 1 teaspoon of white vinegar in one cup of boiled water and multiply this proportion for the volume needed.
- 4.

If you feel flu-like symptoms (mild fever, chills, muscle aches, tiredness), then take extra-strength Tylenol every 6-8 hours while awake (unless you are allergic or cannot take Tylenol). If you still feel the flu-like symptoms, then stop the medication and call your doctor.

Keep your follow-up appointments. Call for evaluation if you should have excessive pain, irritation, fevers, discharge, or pus from the wounds.

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