

FLUOROURACIL TREATMENT (EFFUDEX or FLUOROPLEX)

5-Fluorouracil (abbreviated 5-FU) has the ability to destroy sun-damaged skin cells. Applying 5-FU to the skin removes the rough spots resulting from sun damage (actinic keratoses). After treatment, the skin is then smoother and more youthful-looking.

Apply 5-FU 2 times a day to the skin needing treatment. You may feel stinging or burning when you put 5-FU on your skin. This is normal. Three to five days after you start using 5-FU, your sun-damaged skin will become red and irritated. As you continue treatment, sores and crusts will appear. These raw areas result from the destruction of defective skin cells. They're a necessary part of 5-FU treatment. When an area crusts over, stop treatment but continue on the other areas until they form a light crust.

If the area is irritated, you may use a topical steroid, such as non-prescription 1% hydrocortisone ointment, to relieve irritation. When treatment is stopped, your skin will heal rapidly; in two or three weeks, healthy new skin will have replaced the sun-damaged skin destroyed by the 5-FU. After healing, the treated areas will be redder than normal; this redness will gradually fade in the next few months.

DIRECTIONS FOR USE

1. Treat the following areas with 5-FU:

2. Two times per day, apply the medicine very thinly to the treatment area with your fingertip and massage it in well. Afterwards, wash your finger thoroughly with soap and water.
3. Do not get 5-FU into your eyes, and do not apply it on your eyelids.
4. Keep 5-FU off your lips, unless directed by your physician.
5. Use 5-FU with care in the area between the nose and cheeks, since the medicine may irritate the folds around your nostrils.
6. Do not sunbathe while using 5-FU. Avoid direct sunlight by wearing a broad brimmed hat and using sunscreen.
7. If you wish, you may wash the area that is to be treated with plain water before applying 5-FU.
8. You may use makeup; be sure to apply the 5-FU 15 minutes beforehand.
9. If you notice any unusual or severe reaction, stop the medicine and contact the office.
10. After you've been instructed to stop using the 5-FU, apply a thin layer of plain white petrolatum (Vaseline) or Aquaphor ointment to raw and crusted areas at bedtime. This helps healing. Stop the petrolatum when the crusts and scabs have healed.
11. **CAUTION: 5-Fluorouracil is a powerful, destructive medication and must be used exactly as directed.** Keep your 5-FU locked up so other people can't mistakenly use it to treat a rash.