

How to use Protopic ointment or Elidel cream

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Protopic = Tacrolimus
Elidel = Pimecrolimus

Protopic and Elidel are both steroid-sparing topical medications for eczema or other dermatitis. They are great for long term maintenance use, since they do not have the side effects of topical steroids.

However, if you have acute and severe dermatitis, Protopic or Elidel does not work well. In those instances, I recommend that you use the topical steroids as prescribed for the first week, followed by steroid in the morning and Protopic or Elidel at night in the second week, then switch to just Protopic or Elidel twice a day as necessary for long term maintenance.

When you start to use Protopic or Elidel, you can experience a burning sensation on your skin. This is normal. If that happens to you, it helps to use steroid in the morning and Protopic or Elidel at night for about one week, then discontinue the steroid and just use Protopic or Elidel twice a day. The burning sensation goes away after about 1 week.

Remember, do NOT use either Protopic or Elidel as a moisturizer. Cetaphil cream and Vaseline petrolatum ointment are the best moisturizers. You need to use them liberally everyday.