



Topical Retinoid Treatment: Tretinoin (Retin-A), Differin, Tazorac

Topical retinoids are often prescribed for use in the treatment of acne. They work to normalize the shedding of the skin and thus help to exfoliate the skin and reduce the formation of comedones (black heads and whites heads). They may also be used for the reversal of sun damage and aging.

How to Use Topical Retinoids

1. Begin by using the topical retinoid every other night before bedtime. After one or two weeks, if no irritation has occurred (redness, chapping or itching), increase use to nightly.

If you have more sensitive skin your doctor may recommend that you use the topical retinoid only 2 times per week (eg: Mon and Thurs) and then increase to every other night and then nightly as tolerated.

2. Wait 10-20 minutes after washing your face to apply the retinoid. Wet or moist skin may absorb the medication too quickly causing additional irritation.

3. Apply a tiny amount of medication to form an invisible film on the skin. Use an amount no larger than the size of a pea for the entire face. Be particularly careful when applying around the eyes, nostrils and mouth since these areas are particularly susceptible to irritation. If the medication accidentally gets into eyes, it may cause severe irritation.

4. Wash the retinoid off in the morning and apply sunscreen. Daily sun protection is important because topical retinoids may make your skin more susceptible to sunburn and other adverse effects of the sun.

Recommended cleansers

- Purpose Gentle Cleansing Wash
- Cetaphil Gentle Skin Cleanser

Recommended Moisturizers

- Neutrogena Oil free Moisture with SPF 15
- Oil of Olay Complete Moisturizer with SPF 15
- Purpose Dual Treatment Moisture with SPF 15

5. Full effect of the medication may take several weeks. The beneficial effects of the medication occur only for as long as the drug is used. If application is stopped, the skin returns to its previous state.

PRECAUTIONS AND REACTIONS

1. Topical retinoids should not be used by pregnant women or nursing mothers.
2. Topical retinoids can cause skin irritations. Please review the instructions for use.
3. Topical retinoids makes the skin more sensitive to the sun.
4. Benzoyl peroxide interferes with the efficacy of topical Retinoids. If you are using both topical retinoids and benzoyl peroxide products, use one in the morning and the other in the evening.