PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Metronidazole (Topical

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

MetroCream; Metrogel; MetroLotion; Noritate; Nuvessa; Rosadan [DSC]; Vandazole

Brand Names: Canada

Flagyl; Metrogel; Nidagel; Noritate

What is this drug used for?

All skin products:

- It is used to treat rosacea.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

All vaginal products:

- It is used to treat vaginal infections. If this drug has been given for some other reason, talk with the doctor

for more information.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have taken disulfiram within the past 2 weeks.
- If you are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed. You may need to avoid breast-feeding.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

All products:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists,

and dentists.

- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol or use products that have alcohol in them. You may need to avoid drinking alcohol or taking products that have alcohol in them while using this drug and for some time after your last dose.
- If you are taking a product that has propylene glycol in it, talk with your doctor.
- Metronidazole has been shown to cause cancer in mice and rats with long-term use. Talk with the doctor.
- The doctor has given you this drug for a certain health problem. Do not use this drug for other health problems.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan on getting pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks of using this drug while you are pregnant.

All vaginal products:

- Do not have vaginal sex while using this drug.
- Do not douche or use other vaginal products like tampons while you are using this drug. You may need to avoid these things for some time after the last dose. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.

- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Be sure your doctor and lab workers know you use this drug.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

All products:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Irritation where this drug was used.
- Nervous system problems have happened with the oral and injection forms of this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have a burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal; change in balance or eyesight; dizziness or passing out; headache; not able to sleep; seizures; or trouble speaking. Call your

doctor right away if you feel confused, depressed, irritable, tired, or weak.

All vaginal products:

- Vaginal discharge.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

All skin products:

- Dry skin.
- Scaling.
- Itching.
- Burning or stinging.

All vaginal products:

- Headache.
- Stomach pain.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All products:

- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Use as you have been told, even if your signs get better.

All skin products:

- Do not take this drug by mouth. Use on your skin only. Keep out of your mouth, nose, and eyes (may burn).
- Clean affected part before use. Make sure to dry well.
- Put a thin layer on the affected skin and rub in gently.
- Makeup may be used after the skin has dried.
- Talk with your doctor before you use other drugs or products on your skin.

All vaginal products:

- Do not take this drug by mouth. For vaginal use only. Keep out of your mouth, nose, and eyes (may burn).
- Some products are to be used at bedtime. For some products it does not matter. Check with the pharmacist about how to use this drug.
- Do not use longer than you have been told. A second infection may happen.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Use a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not use 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?
All products:

- Store at room temperature. Do not freeze.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs.

There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

All vaginal products:

- Protect from heat.
- Protect from cold.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else’s drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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