



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Azelaic Acid

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

Azelex; Finacea

Brand Names: Canada

Finacea

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat pimples (acne).
- It is used to treat rosacea.

What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child has an allergy to this drug or any part of this drug.
- If your child is allergic to any drugs like this one or any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.

If your child is breast-feeding a baby:

- Talk with the doctor if your child is breast-feeding a baby or plans to breast-feed a baby.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

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

What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?

All products:

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- It may take several weeks to see the full effects.
- If your child uses this drug too often, the skin problem may become worse.
- Use of other skin products while using this drug may cause more irritation.
- Talk with your child's doctor before you use other drugs or products on your child's skin.
- It is common to have skin irritation with this drug. Skin irritation may include burning, itching, or stinging. Most of the time, skin irritation happened during the first few weeks after starting this drug. Call your child's doctor if your child has skin irritation that is very bad, bothers your child, or does not go away.
- If your child has asthma, use this drug with care. Worsening of asthma has happened in people using this drug. Call your child's doctor right away if your child's asthma gets worse while your child uses this drug.

If your child is pregnant:

- Tell the doctor if your child is pregnant or becomes pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks of your child using this drug while pregnant.

Foam and gel:

- Avoid giving your child spicy food, hot drinks, and hot foods while your child is using this drug.

- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.

Foam:

- This drug may catch on fire. Do not use near an open flame or while smoking.

What are some side effects that I need to call my child's 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 child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- 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.
- Change in color of skin.
- Shortness of breath.

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 child's doctor or get medical help if your child has any side effects that bother your child or do not go away.

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

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All products:

- Do not give by mouth. Use on your child's skin only. Keep out of your child's mouth, nose, and eyes (may burn).
- If this drug gets in the eyes, rinse with a lot of water. If eye irritation lasts for a while, talk with the doctor.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Clean affected part before use. Make sure to dry well.
- Use only mild soaps or cleansing lotions free of soap for facial cleaning.
- Put a thin layer on the affected part and rub in gently.
- To gain the most benefit, do not miss giving your child doses.
- Keep using this drug as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child's signs get better.
- Do not use coverings (bandages, dressings) unless told to do so by the doctor.
- Makeup may be used after the skin has dried.

Foam:

- Shake well before use.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- Put on a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your child's next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not put on 2 doses or extra doses.

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

All products:

- Store at room temperature. Do not freeze.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- 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.

Cream:

- Store this product on its side.

Gel:

- If using the pump product, throw away any part not used 8 weeks after opening.

Foam:

- Protect from heat or open flame. Do not puncture or burn even if it seems empty.
- Throw away any part not used after 8 weeks.

General drug facts

- If your child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Keep a list of all your child's drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your child's doctor.
- Talk with your child's doctor before giving your child any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's 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.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine.

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, 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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