



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Benzyl Alcohol

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

AverTeaX [OTC]; Zilactin [OTC]

What is this drug used for?

Gel and ointment:

- It is used to treat mouth or lip sores.

Lotion:

- It is used to treat head lice.

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 the patient is a child. This drug may not be for use

in all ages of children.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

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?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- This drug may cause harm if swallowed. If this drug is swallowed, call a doctor or poison control center right away.
- This drug has benzyl alcohol in it. If possible, avoid products with benzyl alcohol in newborns or infants. Serious side effects can happen in these children with some doses of benzyl alcohol, including if given with other drugs that have benzyl alcohol. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.

- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

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.

Lotion:

- Irritation where this drug was used.
- Eye irritation.

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:

Gel and ointment:

- Irritation where this drug was used.

Lotion:

- Itching.
- Redness.

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.

Gel and ointment:

- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Do not swallow this drug.
- Do not get this drug in the eyes.
- Dry the area where you will be putting this drug.
- Put a thin layer on the affected part with a cotton swab or clean fingertip.
- Put on affected part only.

Gel:

- Let dry for 30 to 60 seconds.
- Do not peel off dry film. If you need to remove film, put on another coat and wipe the area with a moist cloth.
- This drug may catch on fire. Do not use near an open flame or while smoking.

Lotion:

- Do not take this drug by mouth. Use on your scalp and hair only. Keep out of your mouth, nose, ears, and

eyes (may burn).

- Cover eyes and face with a towel. Keep eyes closed tightly.
- Rub into dry hair and scalp all the way.
- Do not wet hair before putting this drug on.
- Do not cover head while lotion is on hair.
- Leave on for 10 minutes.
- After 10 minutes, fully rinse hair and scalp with water only.
- Wash your hands after use.
- Use special nit comb or tweezers to get rid of dead nits (lice eggs) from hair.
- Wash all bedding, towels, and recently worn clothes in hot water or have them dry cleaned.
- If you get this drug in your eyes, wash right away with water. If you have eye irritation that lasts or a change in eyesight, call your doctor.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

Gel and ointment:

- If you use this drug on a regular basis, put on 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 put on 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.
- Many times this drug is used on an as needed basis. Do not use more often than told by the doctor.

Lotion:

- Put on a missed dose as soon as you think about it.

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.

Gel:

- Protect from heat or open flame.

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.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

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

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

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

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