Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Methoxsalen (Systemic

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ 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

Uvadex

## Brand Names: Canada

Uvadex

## Warning

### Capsules:

- This drug may cause very bad eye problems, age the skin, and raise the chance of skin cancer. You will be watched closely by your doctor.
- There are different brands and forms of this drug. Do not switch between different brands or forms of this drug without calling the doctor who ordered it.

## What is this drug used for?

### Capsules:

- It is used to treat psoriasis.

### Solution:

- It is used to treat a type of lymphoma that affects the skin.

### All products:

- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

## 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 any of these health problems: Squamous cell cancer or if you do not have a lens in your eye (aphakia).
- If you have ever had melanoma.
- If light bothers your skin easily or you have a health problem that may lead to light bothering your skin. There are many health problems that can do this. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

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?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Have your blood work checked and eye exams as you have been told by your doctor.

- Do not sunbathe within 24 hours before taking this drug and the light therapy. Talk with your doctor.
- You will need to wear special sunglasses during and for 24 hours after treatment. Protect lips with lipstick that has sunscreen.
- Do not take this drug for longer than you were told by your doctor.
- Sun or UV rays may age the skin and raise the chance of skin cancer.
- You may get sunburned more easily. Avoid sun, sunlamps, and tanning beds. Use sunscreen and wear clothing and eyewear that protects you from the sun. Keep protecting yourself from sunburn for as long as you were told by your doctor.
- Talk with your doctor before you use other drugs or products on your skin. This includes soaps.
- Blood clots have happened with this drug when used to treat graft-versus-host disease. This drug is not approved to treat graft-versus-host disease. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- This drug may cause harm to an unborn baby. If you may become pregnant, you must use birth control while taking this drug. If you get pregnant, call your doctor right away.
- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your 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:

- 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.

- Sunburn.
- Change in color or size of a mole.
- Depression.
- A skin lump or growth.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Swelling.
- Change in eyesight.

## 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:

- Skin irritation.
- Itching.
- Redness.
- Upset stomach.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Trouble sleeping.

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.

### Capsules:

- This drug is used with light therapy.
- Take before being exposed to UV light as you were told by your doctor.
- Take this drug with food or milk.

### Solution:

- This drug is used with a special system called a photophoresis system. This will be done by your doctor. Talk with your doctor if you have any questions.

## What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

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

### Capsules:

- Store at room temperature protected from light. Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

### Solution:

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

### All products:

- 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.

## 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 https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

## Last Reviewed Date

2023-11-29

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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.

Methoxsalen (Systemic - Last updated on December 12, 2022
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