PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Ruxolitinib (Topical

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

Opzelura

Brand Names: Canada

Opzelura

Warning

- Severe infections have happened in people taking drugs like this one by mouth to treat inflammatory health problems. This includes tuberculosis, viral infections like shingles, bacterial infections, and fungal infections. Sometimes these may lead to treatment in a hospital or death. If your child has an infection, talk with the doctor. Your child may need to avoid using this drug.
- Drugs like this one taken by mouth to treat inflammatory health problems may raise the risk of heart attack, stroke, blood clots, and death. This includes sudden death from heart disease. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Lymphoma and other types of cancer have happened in people taking drugs like this one by mouth to treat inflammatory health problems. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Tell the doctor if your child smokes, has smoked in the past, or has ever had a heart attack, other heart problems, stroke, or blood clot.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat eczema. This drug must only be used when other drugs cannot be used or have not worked.
- It is used to treat a certain type of vitiligo (a skin problem that causes lighter patches of skin).

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

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.

- If a large area needs to be treated.
- If your child has had hepatitis B or C.
- If your child may have a higher risk for blood clots.
- If your child is using another drug like this one. If you are not sure, ask your child's doctor or pharmacist.
- If your child is taking any drugs used to suppress the immune system like azathioprine or cyclosporine. There are many drugs that can do this. Ask the doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.
- If your child takes any drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) that must not be taken with this drug, like certain drugs that are used for HIV, infections, seizures, and others. There are many drugs that must not be taken with this drug.

If your child is breast-feeding a baby:

- Be sure your child does not breast-feed a baby while using this drug and for 4 weeks after the last dose.

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

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 to give this drug with all of your child's other 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?

- 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.
- Do not give more than the doctor told you to give. Do not give more often or for longer than you were told. Doing any of these things may raise the chance of severe side effects.

- Your child may need a TB (tuberculosis) test before starting this drug.
- Have your child's blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- If your child has high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch your child's blood sugar closely. Low blood sugar was seen in people with diabetes who were taking the oral form of this drug.
- High cholesterol and triglyceride levels have happened with the oral form of this drug. If your child has high cholesterol or triglycerides, talk with the doctor.
- Have your child's skin checked. Tell your child's doctor if your child has any skin changes like a new wart, skin sore or reddish bump that bleeds or does not heal, or a change in the color or size of a mole.
- Have your child avoid lots of sun, sunlamps, and tanning beds. Use sunscreen and dress your child in clothing and eyewear that protects from the sun.
- This drug may lower the ability of the bone marrow to make blood cells that the body needs. If blood cell counts get very low, this can lead to bleeding problems, infections, or anemia. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Your child may have more chance of getting infections. Have your child wash hands often. Avoid crowds and people with infections, colds, or flu.
- Your child may bleed more easily. Make sure your child is careful and avoids injury. Be sure your child has a soft toothbrush.
- Use this drug with care in children. They may have more side effects. Talk with the doctor.

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.

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.
- Signs of bleeding like throwing up or coughing up blood; vomit that looks like coffee grounds; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; abnormal vaginal bleeding; bruises without a cause or that get bigger; or bleeding you cannot stop.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Call your child's doctor right away if your child has a swollen gland, night sweats, shortness of breath, or weight loss without trying.
- Call the doctor right away if your child has fever, chills, or sweating; cough; muscle aches; shortness of breath; more sputum or change in color of sputum; red, warm, swollen, painful skin; sores on the body; weight loss; stomach pain; diarrhea; burning or pain with passing urine; passing urine more often; or feeling very tired.
- Call the doctor or get medical help right away if your child has signs of heart attack or stroke. This includes chest pain or pressure, shortness of breath, dizziness or passing out, severe headache, weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in eyesight or balance, or drooping on 1 side of the face.
- Call the doctor right away if your child has signs of a blood clot like chest pain or pressure; coughing up blood; shortness of breath; swelling, warmth, numbness, change of color, or pain in a leg or arm; or trouble speaking or swallowing.

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 any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

- Nose or throat irritation.
- Signs of a common cold.
- Pain or irritation where this drug is used.

For patients with vitiligo:

- Itching, redness, or acne (pimples) where this drug is used.
- Headache.

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.

- Do not give by mouth. Use on your child's skin only. Keep out of your child's mouth, nose, and eyes (may burn).
- Do not put in the vagina.
- Put a thin layer on the affected skin.
- Wash hands before and after use.
- Do not use coverings (bandages, dressings) unless told to do so by the doctor.

For patients with eczema:

- Stop this drug when health problem is gone.

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 at the same time or extra doses.

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

- Store at room temperature.
- 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 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.
- 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 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

2026-08-14

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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.

Ruxolitinib (Topical - Last updated on December 12, 2022
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