PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Tretinoin (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

Altreno; Atralin; Avita [DSC]; Refissa [DSC]; Renova; Renova Pump; Retin-A; Retin-A Micro Pump; Retin-A Micro [DSC]

Brand Names: Canada

Retin-A; Retin-A Micro; Stieva-A [DSC]

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat pimples (acne).

Wrinkle cream:

- If your child has been given this form of this drug, talk with the doctor for information about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions or concerns about giving this drug to your child.

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 your child's skin is sunburned, sensitive to light, or your child has any other skin problems.

- If your child is taking any drugs that may make the skin more sensitive to light. There are many drugs that can do this. Ask your child's doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.
- If your child is pregnant or may be pregnant.

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.
- If your child is allergic to fish, talk with the doctor. Some products have fish protein.
- It may take several weeks to see the full effects.
- Do not give more than what the doctor told you to give. Do not give more often or longer than what you were told. Doing any of these things may raise the chance of very bad side effects.
- Do not put on sunburned skin.
- Do not put on cuts, scrapes, eczema, or damaged skin.
- Practice good skin care and avoid the sun.
- Your child may get sunburned more easily. Have your child avoid sun, sunlamps, and tanning beds. Put sunscreen and lip balm with an SPF of 15 or more on your child when outside. Have your child wear clothing and eyewear that protects from the sun.
- Some weather conditions like cold and wind may irritate the skin. Talk with the doctor or pharmacist about how to protect the skin.

- Avoid contact with the peels of limes.
- 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. This includes soaps.
- Your child may use moisturizer if this drug causes dry skin. Talk with the doctor or pharmacist about what kind of moisturizer to use.
- Your child may use make-up unless your child's doctor has told your child not to. If your child will be using make-up, have your child clean the area to be treated before putting this drug on.
- This drug may cause harm if swallowed. If this drug is swallowed, call a doctor or poison control center right away.

If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if your child takes it during pregnancy. If you think your child may be pregnant, call the doctor right away.
- Tell the doctor if your child is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about any risks to the baby.

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.
- Skin reaction that is severe, bothers your child, or does not go away.

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:

- Feeling of warmth.
- Burning or stinging.
- Change in color of skin.
- Some skin reactions may happen with this drug. These include dry skin, redness, swelling, blisters, and peeling. If these skin reactions happen, talk with your child's doctor. Your child's doctor may want your child to stop using this drug for some time, change how much your child uses, or change how often your child uses this drug.

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 any of these areas, have your child rinse well with water.
- 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.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Wash affected skin and pat dry.

- Use only mild non-medicated soaps to wash the affected area.
- You may need to wait 20 to 30 minutes before use. Check with the pharmacist about how to use this drug.
- Put a thin layer on the affected skin and rub in gently.

Gel:

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

What do I do if my child misses a 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?

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.

Gel:

- Protect from heat or open flame.

Pump:

- Store upright with the cap on.

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 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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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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