



## PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Permethrin

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**

Elimite

### **Brand Names: Canada**

Kwellada-P [OTC]; Nix [OTC]

### **What is this drug used for?**

- It is used to treat scabies.
- It is used to treat lice.
- 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 have an allergy to permethrin, chrysanthemums, or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the

allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.

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.
- Do not use on a child younger than 2 months of age without first checking with the doctor.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan on getting pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks of using this drug while you are pregnant.
- 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.
- Trouble breathing.
- A burning or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Eye irritation.
- Very bad irritation where this drug is used.

### **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:

- Itching. Talk to the doctor about what to do.
- Irritation where this drug is used.

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.

### **How is this drug best taken?**

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

### **All products:**

- Follow how to use as you have been told by the doctor or read the package insert.

### **Spray:**

- **Do not use on people or animals.**
- For use on non-washable items only.
- Spray on infested part and let dry all the way.
- Vacuum rugs and carpets. Throw away vacuum cleaner bags after use.

### **All other products:**

- Do not take this drug by mouth. Use on your skin only. Keep out of your mouth, nose, and eyes (may burn).
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Clean affected part before use. Make sure to dry well.
- Wash all bedding, towels, and recently worn clothes in hot water or have them dry cleaned.

### **Cream:**

- Put a thin layer on the skin from the neck to the toes. Put in the skin folds, creases, and spaces between the fingers and toes.
- Put under fingernails.
- Trim fingernails short.
- Put cream under nails with a toothbrush. Throw away toothbrush after use.
- Wear light clothing while this drug is on your skin.
- Do not let your skin touch anyone else's skin while wearing the cream.
- After 8 to 14 hours, fully wash cream from skin using warm, soapy water.

### **Cream rinse and lotion:**

- Shampoo hair, rinse, and towel dry before use. Use a shampoo without a conditioner.
- Shake well before use.
- Cover eyes and face with a towel.
- Lightly coat hair and scalp.
- Work into hair and scalp gently.
- Leave on for 10 minutes.
- Do not cover head while cream rinse or lotion is on hair.
- After 10 minutes, put a little bit of warm water on hair and lather.

- Rinse fully.
- Wash your hands after use.
- Dry with a towel.
- Use special nit comb or tweezers to get rid of dead nits (lice eggs) from hair.

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

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

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

- Store at room temperature. Throw away any part not used after use.
- 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.

### **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.

- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting 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 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](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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