Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Clindamycin (Topical

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

Cleocin; Cleocin-T; Clindacin; Clindacin ETZ; Clindacin Pac [DSC]; Clindacin-P; Clindagel; Clindesse; Evoclin [DSC]; Xaciato

Brand Names: Canada

Clinda-T; Dalacin T [DSC]; Dalacin Vaginal; TARO-Clindamycin

What is this drug used for?

All skin products:

- It is used to treat pimples (acne).
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

All vaginal products:

- It is used to treat vaginal infections. If this drug has been given for some other reason, talk with the doctor for more information.

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 ever had any of these health problems: Crohn’s disease, certain other stomach or bowel problems (colitis, enteritis), or severe bowel problems while taking an antibiotic (severe diarrhea, bowel swelling, stomach pain).
- If you are using any products that have erythromycin.

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?

All products:

- 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.
- 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.

All skin products:

- Do not use coverings (bandages, dressings, make-up) unless told to do so by the doctor.
- It may take several weeks to see the full effects.
- Talk with your doctor before you use other drugs or products on your skin.
- Some of these drugs may catch on fire. Do not use near an open flame or while smoking.
- If you are breast-feeding and use this drug on your breast or nipple, wash the area before breast-feeding your child.

All vaginal products:

- Do not have sex while using this drug. You may need to avoid sex for some time after the last dose. Talk with your doctor to see if you need to avoid sex after the last dose.
- Do not douche or use other vaginal products like tampons while you are using this drug. You may need to avoid these things for some time after the last dose. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- Do not use longer than you have been told. A second infection may happen.

Vaginal gel:

- Polyurethane condoms may not work to prevent pregnancy or stop the spread of diseases passed through sex while using this drug and for 7 days after you stop this drug. You will need to use latex or polyisoprene condoms during this time.

All other vaginal products :

- Condoms or diaphragms may not work to prevent pregnancy or stop the spread of diseases passed through sex while using this drug and for a period of time after you stop this drug. You will need to use some other kind of birth control for some time after

the last dose. Be sure you know how long to do this.

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.
- A severe form of diarrhea called C diff-associated diarrhea (CDAD) has happened with most antibiotics. Sometimes, this can be deadly. This may happen while using the antibiotic or within a few months after you stop using it. Call your doctor right away if you have stomach pain or cramps, very loose or watery stools, or bloody stools. Do not try to treat diarrhea without first checking with your doctor.

All vaginal products:

- Signs of a urinary tract infection (UTI) like blood in the urine, burning or pain when passing urine, feeling the need to pass urine often or right away, fever, lower stomach pain, or pelvic pain.
- Vaginal itching or discharge.

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:

All skin products:

- Irritation where this drug was used.
- Burning.
- Itching.
- Dry skin.
- Redness.
- Oily skin.

Foam:

- Headache.

All vaginal products:

- Irritation where this drug was used.
- Back pain.
- Constipation.
- Headache.

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.

All skin products:

- Do not take this drug by mouth. Use on your skin only. Keep out of your mouth, nose, and eyes (may burn).
- Use as you have been told, even if your signs get better.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Clean affected part before use. Make sure to dry well.
- Put a thin layer on the affected skin.
- Do not put on open sores or broken skin.

Lotion:

- Shake lotion well before use.

Swabs:

- If using pledgets (swabs), take pledget from the foil just before use. Use 1 time and throw away. More than 1 pledget may be used.

Foam:

- Put foam onto a cool surface or into a cap. Do not place foam in your hands.
- If the can seems warm or the foam seems runny, run cold water over the can.

All vaginal products:

- Do not take this drug by mouth. For vaginal use only. Keep out of your mouth, nose, and eyes (may burn).
- Use as you have been told, even if your signs get better.
- Wash your hands before and after use.

Vaginal cream:

- 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.

Vaginal gel:

- Do not use the applicators more than 1 time.

Suppository:

- Use at bedtime.
- To use suppository, take off foil wrapper.
- Do not use if the pouch that holds this drug is torn, open, or not sealed all the way.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

Vaginal gel:

- Only 1 dose of this drug is needed. If you miss your dose, take it as soon as you think about it.

All other products:

- Use 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 use 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.
- Protect from heat.
- 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.

Foam:

- Protect from heat and sunlight. Do not puncture or burn even if it seems empty.

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.

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

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

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