



## TOPICAL RETINOID INFORMATION

- If your prescription is not covered, you may purchase Differin over the counter. You can find it at any drugstore or even the grocery store and it typically costs about \$15 or less. You may also use GoodRX which provides a coupon for a lower cash price. GoodRX is available as an app to download on your phone or available through the internet
- Topical retinoids such as tretinoin, adapalene, and tazarotene are commonly used to treat acne and other skin conditions. It works by exfoliating dead skin cells to keep them from clogging up pores
- The medicine should be applied at night. Prior to application, wash your face with a gentle cleanser and dry your face completely. Since retinoids can be very irritating when first starting, I recommend you use a very gentle wash such as Purpose Gentle Cleansing Wash, Cetaphil Daily Facial Cleanser, CeraVe Hydrating Cleanser, or Neutrogena Ultra Gentle Daily Cleanser. These are available in most drug stores. Once you are tolerating the medicine, you may use a stronger face wash such as one containing benzoyl peroxide or salicylic acid
- Apply a pea sized amount to the entire face. It is not intended for spot treatment
- Do NOT apply near the eyelid margins. Avoid applying around the mouth unless necessary for treatment. Wipe any extra medicine from the nasal creases to avoid excess irritation
- To reduce irritation, I recommend starting applications every other night or every third night for the first 1-2 weeks and then increasing to every night as tolerated
- Use a facial moisturizer as often as needed for dryness. You may apply the moisturizer immediately before or after the medicine to minimize irritation. Make sure your facial moisturizer is non-comedogenic (won't cause acne). Examples of good moisturizers include CeraVe Moisturizing Cream or Lotion, and Cetaphil Moisturizing Cream or Lotion. If these are too heavy or greasy, consider using Neutrogena Oil-Free Moisture or a similar product
- Use of this medicine will make the skin more sensitive to the sun. Be sure to use a facial sunscreen daily with an SPF of at least 30
- Discontinue use of all acne medications if intending to become pregnant or if you become pregnant
- If you are using tretinoin, do not use the medicine at the same time of day as a leave-on benzoyl peroxide lotion or cream. This will deactivate the tretinoin and reduce its effectiveness.

Leave-on benzoyl peroxide is best used in the morning with the tretinoin to be used at night. You may use a benzoyl peroxide wash at the same time of day as long as it is rinsed off adequately. Adapalene (Differin) and Tazarotene (Tazorac) are ok to use at the same time as a leave-on benzoyl peroxide

- Your acne may initially worsen when you begin your treatment. You will begin to see improvement in your acne after about 6-8 weeks of consistent use

- Do not have any facial hair removed by waxing while using this medication. If you desire to have this type of hair removal done, stop the medicine at least 2 weeks prior. You may resume using your medicine once any irritation subsides