

HUNTERDON DERMATOLOGY, LLC

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5- Fluorouracil

5- Fluorouracil is a topical chemotherapy cream which is used for the treatment of actinic keratoses “pre-cancers” and certain early skin cancers. It selectively targets the actively dividing cells of pre-cancers and skin cancers and will not affect normal cells.

Precautions:

1. Please do not use this medication if you are pregnant, planning on becoming pregnant, or currently nursing.
2. If you suffer from cold sores, please notify your dermatology team **before** starting treatment so that a prescription can be provided to prevent outbreaks.

Instructions on using this medication:

1. Apply a thin layer of the medication and rub in completely with your bare finger until invisible. Do this twice a day for 1 week until the site is red and crusty. Stop treatment if bleeding occurs, it becomes painful or it becomes intensely itchy after only 2-3 days of application.
2. Wash hands thoroughly after applying the medication.
3. Stay out of the sun and avoid sun exposure both during and after treatment as this medication makes you more sensitive to the sun. Wear sun protective clothing and apply sunscreen.
4. Do not apply 5-fluorouracil to raised, painful lesions or dark or crusty lesions without approval from your dermatology team.

What to expect during treatment:

1. During therapy, the treated sites will typically become increasingly pink or red, scaly, and crusty worsening by the end of the week. Most patients experience some degree of discomfort and irritation.
This is a normal reaction and is a sign that the treatment is working.
2. You can wash the treated area daily with water and a mild cleanser.
3. You can apply a soothing ointment like Vaseline to the treated area for comfort between applications, but it must be washed off before the next application.

What to expect after treatment:

1. Even after discontinuing the topical cream, the redness, scaling, crusting and irritation will take weeks to fully resolve. Continue the comfort care above.
2. After healing, the skin may still appear slightly pink; this is normal and will gradually resolve with time. Your skin should feel much smoother once it has completely healed from the treatment course.
3. It is important to practice diligent sun avoidance and sun protection even after treatment is completed as the medication makes you more sensitive to the sun.

Call our office at 908-782-1647 if you have any questions or concerns during treatment.