

EFUDEX (Fluorouracil) Patient handout

This medication is an anticancer drug used to treat pre-cancerous and cancerous growths.

Use this medication as directed. It will be prescribed either for once a day use or twice a day use. **DO NOT** use this medication more often than prescribed. Your condition will not clear faster, but side effects will be increased.

Efudex is applied to the skin only. Use a small amount and rub it in gently. (It is preferable to use a non-metal applicator or a suitable glove. If you use your fingers, immediately wash hands when done.) Avoid applying this medication in or around the eyes, eyelids, nose, or mouth.

It is better to avoid any dressings over the area being treated but a loose, porous gauze dressing may be applied if needed. Avoid tight fitting dressings.

It is advisable to treat only one area at a time, i.e.: forehead, nose, forearm, etc. The area treated will first turn red. Then the area will blister, followed by crusting or scabbing (**DO NOT** pick at the blisters or scabs). You will eventually have erosions. (At this point you will stop using the cream. Usually takes 2 to 4 weeks to reach this stage). Then healing will take place and new skin will be formed. This entire process will take anywhere from 2 to 3 months.

This medication may cause skin irritation, burning, inflammation, itching, pain, tenderness, changes in skin color at the site of the application, watery eyes, trouble sleeping, irritability, increased sun sensitivity, medicinal taste in mouth while using this medication, and temporary hair loss at the application site.

If you experience any other effects that are not listed, contact your doctor, pharmacist or the clinic nurse.

DO NOT use this medication if you have a certain enzyme deficiency (DPD – dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase).

This medication **increases sensitivity to sunlight**. Avoid prolonged exposure to sunlight or sunlamps. Avoid tanning booths. Wear protective clothing and use sunscreen.

Pregnancy Category X – avoid this medication during pregnancy as it will cause birth defects. It is not known whether this medication is excreted in breast milk. Do not nurse while using this medication.

Please review information sheet as given out by pharmacy and package insert for more information and other side effects.