

Patients' Guide to 5-Fluorouracil (Efudex) Therapy

When a patient has many precancers (Actinic Keratoses) on a certain area of the body, topical field therapy like 5-Fluorouracil cream (*Efudex*, *Carac*) is sometimes recommended. This has the benefit of treating subclinical lesions that are often undetectable, and allows extensive lesions to be treated without the discomfort of cryotherapy.

The treatment duration of Efudex cream is twice daily for 2-4 weeks, during which time you should expect to have an erosive reaction causing redness and scabs on the precancerous spots. Skin not damaged by UV rays do not typically react to the cream. For some, the scabbing will begin within a few days; for others it will take up to two weeks and should be completed after two weeks from the onset of symptoms. Wash with a gentle cleanser like Cetaphil or Dove during treatment, and you may moisturize each day with Cetaphil or Eucerin lotion. Always wash your face before applying Efudex, however. This is an example of a woman (not a patient of PWD) who has the expected response to Efudex:



You should continue to treat until lesions have a rust-colored scab on them. Once this occurs, you should discontinue the medication and apply Vaseline liberally to start the healing process. You should avoid sun exposure during the entire treatment and recovery period.

Your prescriber will advise you of a follow up one month from completion of the treatment or at your usual six month check-up. If you have any questions during the course of therapy, please call the office at (571)261-1234.