

TOPICAL RETINOIDS

You have been prescribed a medication for your acne called a retinoid. These medications include Differin[®], Retin-A[®], and Tazorac[®]. These medications work by normalizing the secretion of oils from your pores and loosening blackheads. Here are some important reminders:

- One time daily (morning or night), clean your face with a gentle cleanser (examples--Cetaphil[®] facial wash or Dove[®]).
- Apply a non-comedogenic, non-medicated facial moisturizer (i.e., Cetaphil facial moisturizer).
- Then, immediately apply your medication over the moisturizer. Use only a pea-sized amount of the medication for your entire face. Using more than the suggested amount will likely irritate your skin. Start by squeezing a small amount of the medication onto your fingertip and dab onto your forehead, cheeks, chin, and nose. Then, spread over the entire area, using the moisturizer to help spread the medicine. This will help minimize irritation. These medications are not spot treatments.
- You may notice a slight visible residue on skin after application.
- These medications may cause significant redness, peeling, and irritation depending on how your skin reacts. Typically, this improves with continued application. If you become too irritated, decrease the frequency of application to every other or every third night.
- You may notice worsening of your acne during the first 4-6 weeks. Improvement usually begins around 8 weeks and continues with continued use.
- **The primary goal of this treatment is to prevent blockage of pores, so you will need to keep using it even after you have improved.**
- Avoid excessive irritation like rubbing, too much washing, astringents, harsh soaps, and buff puffs.
- **Do not use this medication if you are pregnant.**
- After you are tolerating this regimen without dryness, you may apply the medication directly to your skin without applying moisturizer first.