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## ACNE GENERAL CARE

Typically a retinoid is recommended or prescribed to treat your acne. (i.e., Differin/Adapalene, Tretinoin, Tazarotene). These medicines can be irritating to the skin and it is important to use sparingly, applying about the size of a “pencil eraser” to cover the whole face. Treating the whole face is important as this helps prevent new acne lesions from forming. If irritation develops stop the medicine until it clears, then restart using every other or every third day, increasing the frequency as your skin adapts.

### Specific Medicine Tips:

Tretinoin is best applied to dry skin to avoid irritation

Tazarotene (Tazorac<sup>®</sup>) best applied **over** an oil-free moisturizer

Cleanse your face twice daily with a gentle pore exfoliating cleanser.

Do not use abrasive scrubs. Excessive scrubbing can irritate the skin and worsen

### Tips For **Women**:

- Remove your makeup thoroughly before going to bed.
- Use lipstick instead of lip gloss
- Avoid crème eye shadows and blushes,
- Avoid metallic eye shadows body and face glitter
- Avoid oil based and creamy foundations, look for “oil-free” or “non-comedogenic” labeling

### **Diet and Acne:**

Some studies have suggested a low carb diet may improve acne, this relates to the glycemic index of foods.

Limit intake of processed and high glycemic index foods, many lists are available online.

- Low glycemic index: 55 or less
- Medium glycemic index: 56 to 69
- High glycemic index: 70 or greater

Zinc has anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory effects and may reduce skin oil production. Meat and poultry are the main dietary sources of Zinc. Vegetarians should consider Zinc supplementation to maintain adequate zinc levels.

Supplementing with Vitamin B complex vitamins can occasionally help acne, especially if a deficiency exists.

### **Stress and Acne:**

Stress can be a strong trigger for acne to flare.

Exercise, breathing relaxation and meditation can be helpful in reducing stress.

### **Hyper-pigmentation and Acne:**

Post acne hyperpigmentation (PIHP) or dark spots can be improved with topical OTC and prescription medications, meticulous sun protection, and procedures (chemical peels and laser treatments)

Apply a sunscreen with an SPF factor of 30 or more daily that is oil free, discuss with your doctor prescriptive and procedures to help fade these spots. Several prescriptives used to treat acne can help discoloration as well. If your acne is well controlled the PIHP should fade with time regardless.

### **Sun Exposure and Acne:**

Although sun exposure and ultraviolet radiation from tanning beds often reduces acne, it should not be used to treat acne.

Careful sun protection with an oil-free 30 SPF sunscreen along with sun avoidance should be practiced.

Sun and tanning beds directly correlates to skin cancer, the more you have the more likely you are to get.

Many acne medicines are sun-sensitizing, making you burn easier. Sun protection is key for healthy younger looking skin.



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## Topical Retinoids

You have been prescribed a topical medication called a retinoid and are a crucial part of your treatment regimen. These medications include Retin-A/tretinoin, Adapalene, trifarotene, tazarotene/Tazorac. These medications are used to treat acne, irregular pigmentation, scarring and photodamage. They are also used for the treatment of fine lines and wrinkles by inducing new collagen formation. Here are some guidelines when using these products:

1. Use one time daily after washing your face. Make sure to pat dry your skin before applying
2. Apply only a pea-sized amount of the medication for the entire face. Using more than suggested may cause irritation. Start by squeezing a small pea-sized amount onto your fingertip and dab onto your forehead, cheeks, chin, and nose. Spread thinly over entire face. You may use a moisturizer immediately following.
3. These medications are meant for full face application, not spot treatment.
4. You may notice a slightly visible residue on the skin after application
5. These medications may cause redness, peeling and irritation, called "retinoid dermatitis." Typically your face will adjust after several weeks with continued application. If redness and irritation become significant, reduce the application frequency to every other night or even every third night. Irritation can also be managed by applying moisturizer to your skin BEFORE applying the medication.
6. You may notice slight worsening of your acne during the first 4 weeks as the pores start to be expressed. This is normal and acne begins to improve around 6 weeks and continues with use. For anti-aging and pigmentation, it may take 6 months to see improvement, but continues to improve the longer you use it.
7. Consistency is KEY to successful outcome.
8. This medication is not recommended in pregnancy.