



TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR MULTIPLE ACTINIC KERATOSES (PRE-SKIN CANCERS THAT MAY DEVELOP INTO SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMAS)

5 FLUOROURACIL CREAM (EFUDEX 5% , FLUOROPLEX 1%, OR CARAC 0.5 %), specifically attacks the pre-skin cancer cells (actinic keratoses), even the ones that are too small to see. It is excellent for severe sun damage. Areas are **treated 1-2 times daily for a period of 2-4 weeks**, depending upon the location and specific cream used. Patients will develop minimal to severe **redness, crusting and/or scabbing or raw areas**. Patients must void sun exposure during treatment; thus, the best treatment time would be during the fall or winter months, well before or after the holidays. This treatment requires more motivation on the part of the patient, due to the noticeable reaction and potential discomfort, but it is covered by most insurance plans. A generic is available for **EFUDEX 5%**.

IMIQUIMOD CREAM, (ALDARA 5%, ZYCLARA 3.75 %), can be used to treat actinic keratoses and Imiquimod Cream 5% to treat some superficial skin cancers. Imiquimod works from within by activating your body's own immune system to treat disease. Depending on the lesion being treated, **treatment times can vary (application of Imiquimod Cream 5% at bedtime 3-7 times per week for about 6-8 weeks and the Zyclara Cream 3.75% once daily for 14 days, then off treatment for 14 days, then resume treatment once daily for 14 days)**. Treatment reaction varies by patient, but most patients experience redness, swelling, itching, flaking, or scabbing at or around the affected area during the course of treatment. Patients should minimize sun exposure during treatment. This treatment is covered by most insurance plans, but patient co-pays can be costly. A generic is available for **ALDARA 5%**.

PICATO GEL, (0.015% OR 0.05%), for treatment of actinic keratoses on limited areas. It can be used **on the face and scalp (once daily for 3 days) or trunk and extremities (once daily for 2 days)**. Most reactions are local skin reactions: Pain, itching, irritation, possible skin infections, and swelling if used around the eyes. This treatment may be covered by insurance plans, but patient co-pays can be costly. A generic is currently not available.

SOLARAZE GEL is a topical gel used to treat actinic keratoses. Treatment period is 2-3 months and sun avoidance is recommended during treatment. Solaraze Gel is well tolerated by most patients due to being less irritating than treatment with other prescription creams/gels. This treatment is covered by most insurance plans, but patient co-pays can be costly. A generic is currently not available.

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