

CONSUMER MEDICINE INFORMATION

BETA CREAM & OINTMENT

Betamethasone valerate 0.1% w/w

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about BETA CREAM and OINTMENT. It does not contain all the information available on these medicines. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of using BETA CREAM or OINTMENT against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

If you have any concerns about using this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet. You may want to read it again.

What BETA CREAM or OINTMENT is used for and how it works

Your BETA CREAM or OINTMENT contains the active ingredient betamethasone valerate. It belongs to a group of medicines known as topical corticosteroids. "Topical" means that they are applied onto the skin. Topical corticosteroids are used to help reduce inflammation in the affected area which helps to reduce redness and itchiness caused by the skin disease.

BETA CREAM or OINTMENT is useful in treating various inflamed conditions of the skin such as:

- psoriasis
- severe forms of eczema
- lichen planus (chronic itchy skin of unknown origin)
- discoid lupus erythematosus (recurring scaly rash)
- prickly heat skin reaction
- insect bite reactions
- prurigo nodularis (an itching and thickening of the skin with lumps or nodules)
- contact sensitivity reactions
- an additional treatment for an intense widespread reddening and inflammation of the skin

when milder topical corticosteroids cannot treat the skin condition effectively.

BETA CREAM is usually used to treat skin conditions on moist surfaces; BETA OINTMENT is usually used to treat skin conditions on dry, scaly skin.

Your doctor, however, may prescribe BETA CREAM or OINTMENT for another purpose. Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why BETA CREAM or OINTMENT has been prescribed for you.

There is no evidence that BETA CREAM or OINTMENT is addictive.

BETA CREAM and OINTMENT is available on a prescription from your doctor.

Before you use BETA CREAM or OINTMENT

When you must not apply it

Do not use BETA CREAM or OINTMENT if you are allergic to betamethasone valerate or any other ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.

Symptoms of an allergic reaction may include unusual reddening of the face, skin rash or hives, itching on the skin, short of breath, wheezing or finding it difficult to breath, swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body.

Do not use BETA CREAM or OINTMENT as treatment for the following skin conditions:

- **rosacea** (unusual reddening of the nose and cheeks)
- **acne**
- **peri-oral dermatitis** (a skin condition involving the mouth area)
- **viral skin conditions** e.g. herpes, chickenpox
- **fungal or yeast skin infections** eg. candidiasis, tinea
- **bacterial skin infections** e.g. impetigo
- **ulcerative conditions**
- **skin conditions around the anal or genital areas including genital herpes.**

If your doctor advises the use of BETA CREAM or OINTMENT to treat one of the above skin complications, it is important you follow your doctor's instructions carefully.

Do not use BETA CREAM or OINTMENT in children under one year of age to treat skin conditions, including nappy or other skin rashes.

Do not apply BETA CREAM or OINTMENT to the face, unless your doctor tells you to.

Do not use BETA CREAM or OINTMENT after the expiry date (EXP) printed on the pack.

Do not use BETA CREAM or OINTMENT if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

Do not let the cream or ointment enter your eyes.

Before you apply it

Tell your doctor if:

- You have had an allergic reaction to any medicine, including BETA CREAM or OINTMENT or other previous treatments for your skin condition
- You are pregnant or plan to become pregnant
- You are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed
- You have a skin disease, such as psoriasis.

Taking other medicines

If you are taking any other medicines, including any you get without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop, tell your doctor or pharmacist.

Your doctor or pharmacist has more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while taking BETA CREAM or OINTMENT.

How to use your BETA CREAM or OINTMENT properly

How much to use

Your doctor will tell you how much BETA CREAM or OINTMENT you need to apply each day. It is important that you only apply BETA CREAM or OINTMENT exactly as directed by your doctor. **Do not use more than the recommended amount.**

Sometimes repeated short courses of BETA CREAM or OINTMENT may be used to control your skin condition. **Your doctor may tell you to use a different amount. If so, it is important you follow their instructions carefully.**

How long to use it

Your doctor will advise you how long to use BETA CREAM or OINTMENT. Duration of treatment might take from a few days to a longer period of time.

Do not use BETA CREAM or OINTMENT for any longer than your doctor has prescribed. Using this type of medicine for a long time may affect the normal production of steroids in your body and be harmful to your health.

Duration of treatment will depend on your condition and can vary between a few days to a longer period of time. If your condition does not clear within a few weeks, tell your doctor.

If you forget to use it

If you miss one or more doses of BETA CREAM or OINTMENT, apply a single dose again as soon as you remember and continue using until the course of the treatment is completed. **Do not apply two doses at once to make up for a missed dose.**

If you have trouble remembering to use your medicine, ask your pharmacist for some hints.

While you are using BETA CREAM or OINTMENT

Things you must do

Tell all doctors, dentists and pharmacists who are treating you that you are using BETA CREAM or OINTMENT.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist that you are using BETA CREAM or OINTMENT before you start any new medicines.

Tell your doctor if you develop a skin rash or hives while using BETA CREAM or OINTMENT.

Tell your doctor if you become pregnant while using BETA CREAM or OINTMENT.

If you are going to have a surgery, tell the surgeon or anaesthetist that you are using BETA CREAM or OINTMENT.

If you are going to have any blood tests, tell your doctor that you are using BETA CREAM or OINTMENT.

If you use BETA CREAM or OINTMENT on the eyelids, be careful to avoid contact with the eyes.

If you are using BETA CREAM or OINTMENT under dressings, cleanse the skin before a fresh dressing is applied.

Visit your doctor regularly so they can check on your progress, especially if your doctor has prescribed BETA CREAM or OINTMENT for psoriasis.

Things you must not do

Do not use BETA CREAM or OINTMENT to treat any other complaints or skin conditions unless your doctor tells you to.

Do NOT give this medicine to anyone else, even if his or her symptoms seem similar to yours.

Side effects

Most people find that if they apply the cream or ointment correctly they will not experience any side effects. All medicines can however, have some unwanted effects in some people. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical treatment if you get some of the side effects.

Tell your doctor if you notice any of the following effects:

- thinning of the skin and stretch marks
- changes in the colour of your skin
- increased hair growth
- blood vessels that are close to the skin surface, becoming more visible
- your skin condition becomes pimply
- increased severity in other untreated skin infections.

Applying BETA over long periods of time, or using more than the recommended dose, may increase the chance of developing side effects.

If your skin condition gets worse during treatment, stop applying BETA CREAM or OINTMENT and tell your pharmacist or doctor as soon as possible.

The list of side effects mentioned above is not complete. If you should suffer from any of these side effects or any other undesired effect please tell your doctor or pharmacist.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects. You may not experience any of them.

In case of overdose

You should only apply the amount that has been prescribed by your doctor.

If you think that you, or if anyone else, has swallowed BETA CREAM or OINTMENT by mistake, or used too much BETA CREAM or OINTMENT, immediately contact your doctor or the National Poisons Information Centre (0800 POISON or 0800 764 766) or go to the Emergency department at your nearest hospital. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning. You may need urgent medical attention. Take the container of BETA CREAM or OINTMENT with you if you can.

Keep telephone numbers for these places handy.

Storage conditions

Keep your BETA CREAM or OINTMENT in the container until it is time to use it.

Store below 25°C and out of reach of children. Avoid exposure to heat, light and moisture.

Do not store the BETA CREAM or OINTMENT, or any other medicine, in the bathroom or near a sink.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop using the BETA CREAM or OINTMENT or if it has passed the expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with the remaining medicine.

Product Description

What BETA CREAM or OINTMENT looks like

Both BETA CREAM and OINTMENT are white in colour.

BETA CREAM and OINTMENT contains 0.1% w/w of the active ingredient, betamethasone valerate.

BETA CREAM also contains white soft paraffin, cetostearyl alcohol, liquid paraffin, cetareth 20, sodium phosphate monobasic, chlorocresol, sodium hydroxide and purified water.

BETA OINTMENT also contains white soft paraffin, white beeswax, propylene glycol and stearyl alcohol.

If you want to know more

Should you have any questions regarding this product, please contact your doctor or pharmacist.

Who supplies this medicine

Distributed in New Zealand by:

Mylan New Zealand Ltd,
PO Box 11183, Ellerslie,
Auckland.

Telephone: 09 5792792

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31 March 2010
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