Dr Kate M Kelly
Skin Cancer & Reconstructive Surgery

THE OTTAWA CLINIC

Efudex: Application Instructions

What is Efudex?

Efudex (generic: Fluorouracil) is a chemotherapy cream that targets and destroys rapidly growing pre-cancerous cells.

What to expect:

Efudex attacks both abnormal and some normal rapidly growing skin cells in the areas where it is applied. This means that after a few days of using Efudex, your skin in and around where the cream is applied may develop:

- Redness
- Itching and/or burning sensations
- Scaling and/or peeling
- Tenderness
- Blisters and/or weeping

THIS IS NORMAL - in fact, the worse the reaction, the better the cream is working to kill off abnormal cells! A few weeks after you finish applying Efudex, the old, rough, sun-damaged skin will be replaced with new, smooth, healthy skin.

How to use Efudex:

- **Apply morning and night** every day for 3 weeks to the areas indicated by your doctor. Wash your hands thoroughly after applying Efudex.
- **Wash** your face gently morning and night. Avoid harsh cleansers.
- **Apply Vaseline** (NOT POLYSPORIN) to keep the skin moist. ***We do not recommend Polysporin*** as studies have shown that it leads to worse healing. Do not use makeup while using Efudex.
- You may use **Tylenol** and **apply cool compresses** if you experience pain.
- **Elevate the head of the bed** while sleeping to minimize swelling that may develop overnight.
- **Avoid prolonged sun exposure** while using Efudex as it can worsen the side effects.

Call our office if:

- *You experience severe pain that is not controlled with Tylenol and/or Advil*
- *You develop a fever while using Efudex*
- *Occasionally patients can't tolerate the full treatment course: Please contact us if you are struggling*
- *At any time, you have questions or concerns and would like to speak to a nurse: We are here to help!*

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