Fusidic acid for skin infections (Fucidin)

Apply the cream or ointment three or four times a day, unless you have been told otherwise. Wash your hands well afterwards, as this will help to reduce the risk of spreading the infection. Your skin should start to improve after a few days. Let your doctor know if you feel there is no improvement after this time.

About fusidic acid cream/ointment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of medicine</th>
<th>An antibacterial skin preparation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Used for</td>
<td>Skin infections (adults and children)</td>
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| Also called      | Brand names: Fucidin®; Fucidin® H (fusidic acid with hydrocortisone); Fucibet® (fusidic acid with betamethasone); Xemacort® (fusidic acid with betamethasone)  
Alternative generic name: sodium fusidate |
| Available as     | Cream and ointment |

Fusidic acid is prescribed for skin infections caused by germs called staphylococcal bacteria. Such infections include impetigo, infected cuts and grazes, and infected dermatitis. It works by stopping the growth of the germs causing the infection. Sodium fusidate is a salt of fusidic acid and it works in the same way. You may find this name being given as the ingredient if you have been prescribed an ointment to use.

Fusidic acid cream and sodium fusidate ointment are antibacterial preparations which usually clear skin infection quickly, particularly where the infection only covers a small area. If the infection is more widespread, antibiotic tablets or a liquid medicine may be needed (see separate medicine leaflet called Sodium fusidate for infections for more information about this).

If the area of skin is inflamed as well as infected, your doctor may prescribe a cream which combines fusidic acid with an anti-inflammatory agent, such as hydrocortisone (brand name Fucidin® H) or betamethasone (brand names Fucibet® and Xemacort®).

Before using fusidic acid cream/ointment

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine can only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start using the preparation it is important that your doctor or dentist knows:

- If you are pregnant or breast-feeding (although fusidic acid is not known to be harmful to a baby).
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine, or to any skin preparation.
How to apply fusidic acid cream/ointment

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer’s printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about how to use the brand of cream or ointment you have been supplied with, and it will also provide you with a full list of side-effects which you could experience.
- Use the preparation exactly as your doctor tells you to. Apply a thin layer of cream/ointment to the infected area and rub it in gently. Unless you have been told otherwise, use it 3-4 times a day. Remember to wash your hands well after you have finished using it (unless you are using it to treat your hands).
- Only use it for as long as your doctor has instructed you to. A course of treatment typically lasts for around seven days. You should not use the cream or ointment for longer than 10 days.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Your skin should start to improve after a few days of treatment. If you think the treatment is not working after this time you should let your doctor know. Sometimes an infection can be resistant to a particular antibiotic and an alternative antibiotic is needed. Likewise, if the infection has not gone by the time you have completed the course of treatment, make another appointment to see your doctor.
- Many skin infections are contagious and can be passed on by touching. To help reduce the risk of this, try to avoid touching the infected area other than when applying the preparation, and use separate towels and facecloths to those used by other members of your family.
- If you are using the preparation near your face, be careful not to get it into your eyes. If this does happen, rinse it off with plenty of warm water.

Can fusidic acid cream/ointment cause problems?

Fusidic acid skin preparations may occasionally cause irritation, although this is usually mild and not troublesome.

Allergic reactions can occur rarely. If you develop a severe rash, you should contact your doctor or pharmacist for advice as soon as possible.

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the preparation, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.

How to store fusidic acid cream/ointment

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.
Important information about all medicines

The preparation is for use on the skin only. If someone swallows some of it, contact the accident and emergency department of your local hospital for advice.

If you are having an operation or any dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are taking or using.

If you buy any medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are suitable for you to use alongside your other medicines.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

Further reading & references


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