

## Flourouracil Cream for Precancerous Change

### What is this medication for?

Flourouracil cream is used to treat actinic or solar keratoses (scaly or crusted lesions [skin areas] caused by years of too much exposure to sunlight). Fluorouracil cream is also used to treat a type of skin cancer called superficial basal cell carcinoma if usual types of treatment cannot be used. Fluorouracil is in a class of medications called antimetabolites. It works by killing fast-growing cells such as the abnormal cells in actinic keratoses and basal cell carcinoma.

### How should this medicine be used?

Fluorouracil comes as a cream to apply to the skin. It is usually applied to the affected areas twice a day. To help you remember to use fluorouracil, apply it around the same times every day. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully and ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Use fluorouracil exactly as directed. Do not apply more or less of it or apply it more often than prescribed by your doctor.

- **For Actinic or Solar Keratoses:** continue using fluorouracil until the lesions start to peel off. This usually takes 2-4 weeks. Lesions may not be completely healed until 1 or 2 months after you stop using the cream.
- **For Basal cell carcinoma:** Continue using fluorouracil until the lesions are gone. This usually takes 3-9 weeks but could take as long as 10-12 weeks.

During the first few weeks of treatment, the skin lesions and surrounding areas will feel irritated and look red, swollen, and scaly. This is a sign that fluorouracil is working. Do not stop using fluorouracil unless your doctor has told you to do so.

Apply fluorouracil cream with a nonmetal applicator, a glove, Q-tip, or your finger. If you apply fluorouracil cream with your finger, be sure to wash your hands well immediately afterwards. Do not cover the treated areas with a bandage or dressing unless your doctor tells you to. Do not apply fluorouracil cream or topical solution to the eyelids or the eyes, nose, or mouth.

### What precautions should I follow?

#### **Before using fluorouracil:**

- Tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to fluorouracil or any other medications
- Tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are taking, especially other topical medications. Your doctor may need to change the doses of your medications or monitor you carefully for side effects.
- Tell your doctor if you have or have ever had dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase (DPD) enzyme deficiency (a lack of a naturally occurring enzyme in your body).
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant,