



RETINOID TREATMENT FOR ACNE

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You have been prescribed a retinoid to treat your acne. Some commonly prescribed retinoids include: Tretinoin (Retin A/Renova/Ziana), Differin, and Tazorac/Avage. They belong to a group of medications that are related to Vitamin A. By decreasing the “stickiness” of skin cells, promoting exfoliation, and decreasing sebum (oil) production, retinoids are very effective in treating the blackheads and whiteheads that are the initial cause of all acne blemishes. **These effects cannot be achieved by any other topical medication or by oral antibiotics.**

Because exfoliation is what clears the acne blemishes and opens clogged pores that may form future pimples, exfoliation is a necessary part of the treatment process and will diminish as your treatment progresses. The goal is to make this as comfortable as possible without decreasing the effectiveness of the treatment. Use of a light oil free moisturizer, such as our Vitalia Sage and Citrus Moisturizer, may alleviate the dryness and peeling. Avoiding application of the medication around the sensitive easily irritated areas near the eyes and in the creases around the nose, mouth and chin, and using the medication every second or third night will help the skin slowly “adapt” to the treatment.

You may notice an increase in pinkness of your skin while on treatment. This is because the medication stimulates healthy growth by increasing the circulation in the skin. A possible increase in the sun sensitivity of the treated area may require that you be more attentive in protecting your skin from the sun. Also because retinoids affect the stickiness of skin cells, the skin is more sensitive to minor trauma. **Picking and waxing should be avoided while on treatment.** Women who become pregnant should discontinue treatment.

As your treatment progresses, you may notice blemishes trapped under the surface coming to the surface to be cleared away. This **must** occur before overall improvement can take place. In fact for best results, more stubborn blackheads and whiteheads may require Directed Aesthetic Therapy such as Microdermabrasion, Clarifying Acne Facials with extractions, or Chemical Peels. **It takes six to eight weeks, if using the medication every night, to see the full benefit of the treatment.** Consistency with the medication and your patience is necessary for successful treatment.

Instructions for Use

Cleanse your face gently with the cleanser that you were instructed to use. Blot dry gently with a soft towel. For your face, you need only apply a small pea sized amount of your medication and dot it on your forehead, cheeks, and chin. Then spread a thin film out evenly over your entire face. Be careful to avoid your eyes, lips, and the areas surrounding them.