

# Tretinoin

Tretinoin is a generic drug that has been available for over 40 years in the United States. Tretinoin is a form of vitamin A that is used as a cream or gel on the skin to treat various conditions such as:

- acne
- wrinkles or photo aging
- sun damage
- age spots or sun spots
- stretch marks
- skin preparation for chemical peel

**Strengths:** 0.025%, 0.05%, 0.1%. Higher concentrations typically provide greater aesthetic results, but may have more initial skin irritation.

**Directions:** Wash your skin with a mild, non-irritating cleanser. Apply a pearl size amount of product to clean, dry skin *nightly*.

Tretinoin may take time to build tolerance to being used every night. You may consider starting 2-3 times a week and slowly adding days as you graduate in progression.

**Side effects:** Tretinoin helps skin cells on the upper layers turn over quicker and can have a reaction similar to a gentle peel on the skin when first used. *IT IS NOT A MOISTURIZER*. One might encounter slight redness (hot pink), dryness, or flakiness as possible irritation. This irritation should ease as you graduate your tolerance. If you are bothered by these side effects, then you can back down and return to usage 2-3 times a week.

**Helpful hints:** Mixing tretinoin with a moisturizer of your choice may be more tolerable on the skin. Start slowly and build your tolerance.

It doesn't take a lot of product to make the impact of results!

Use a sunscreen every morning as tretinoin can make you more sun sensitive (think of that baby skin being exposed to sun rays!). Strictly avoid intentional tanning!

Other skin care products such as glycolic acid or benzoyl peroxide (unless advised by your physician) should be stopped while using tretinoin. Tell your doctor or skin care specialist performing a procedure such as a chemical peel, microdermabrasion, or laser treatments that you are on tretinoin. You may need to stop tretinoin for a period of time before and after your treatment.

What happens when I stop getting a reaction? The tretinoin is still working!! Removing those original layers off at the beginning just gets your skin in top performance to keep working hard to stay in shape! Just like the gym, if you don't do it or stop you just return to the beginning after awhile. So don't think it's stopping just because you can tolerate it!