

## Efudex Treatment

Efudex (abbreviated 5-FU) has the ability to destroy pre-cancerous skin cells. Applying 5-FU to the skin removes the rough spots resulting from sun damage (Actinic Keratosis). The skin is then smoother and more youthful looking.

Apply 5-FU two times a day to the skin needing treatment. You may feel stinging or burning when you put 5-FU on your skin. This is normal. Three to five days after you start using 5-FU, your sun-damaged skin will become red and irritated. As you continue the treatment, sores and crusts will appear. These raw areas result from the destruction of defective skin cells. They are a necessary part of 5-FU treatment. The treatment usually continues for 2-4 weeks.

When treatment is stopped, your skin will heal rapidly; in 2-3 weeks healthy new skin will have replaced the sun-damaged skin destroyed by the 5-FU. After healing, the treated areas will be redder than normal; this redness will gradually fade in the next few months.

### Directions for Using Efudex

- Two times daily, apply the medicine very thinly to the treatment area with your fingertip and massage it in well.
- Afterward, wash your finger thoroughly with water.
- Do not get 5-FU in your eyes, and **do not** use it on your eyelids.
- Keep 5-FU off your eyelids.
- Use 5-FU with care in the area between the nose and cheeks since the medicine may irritate the folds around your nostrils.
- Do not sunbathe while using 5-FU. The sun tends to intensify your skin's reaction to this medication. You want to avoid this.
- If you wish, you may wash the area that is to be treated with plain water *before* applying 5-FU.
- You may use makeup. Be sure to apply the 5-FU before applying makeup.
- **If you notice an unusual or severe reaction, stop the medicine and contact our office.**
- After you've been instructed to stop using 5-FU, apply plain white petroleum jelly (Vaseline) thinly to red and crusted areas at bedtime. This helps healing. Stop the petroleum when crusts and scabs have healed.
- **CAUTION: 5-FU is a powerful, destructive medication and must be used exactly as directed.** Keep it away from eyes and mouth. Keep your 5-FU locked so other people can not mistakenly use it.
- Once your skin is completely healed, we recommend using a sunscreen every day with an SPF of 25 or higher (rain or shine) to prevent further skin damage.

Please call our office if you have any further questions, Ada Dermatology - 208-3770820