



ACCUTANE (isotretinoin) PROTOCOL

This protocol is based on FDA standards and iPledge requirements. This is the standard of care in our office and we ask that all patients conform to it during their Accutane treatment (usually five to six months). You must have one doctor's office visit and one lab test each month for the duration of your treatment. (We save Accutane office visits before school on Tuesdays and after school on Monday so kids don't have to miss school. If you make your follow up visit at the front desk on the way out, you will be able to get one of these appointments. If you call for an appointment, the call center does not have access to these appointments. So you will have to call and ask to leave a message for your dermatologist.)

Schedule your following month appointment at the time of check-out (or schedule a few months' appointments).

Keep track of your medication – If you must cancel your appointments for any reason, reschedule as soon as possible. It will not hurt you to run out of medication, however, it could set your treatment back—prolonging your treatment time.

Females need to fill their prescription within 6-7 days of your pregnancy test. Males need to fill their prescription within 6-7 days of your office visit. If you do not fill the prescription within this time frame, iPledge will lock you out of the system.

Your medication can only be dispensed in one month's quantity. Your dosage may increase from month to month.

Read and keep the iPledge booklet and refer to it when needed.

Take your medicine with food for better absorption (preferably with fatty food - one spoonful of peanut butter should qualify as enough fat).

DO NOT get pregnant or breastfeed while on Accutane and for one month after.

During the course and for six months after, do not donate blood and do not have elective surgeries, waxing, piercings or tattoos.

Tylenol, alcohol, and health food supplements are not recommended with Accutane.

If you have any worrisome problems, stop the medicine and call your dermatologist.

MOST SERIOUS REACTION

Birth defects if pregnancy occurs during treatment or within one month after. (Accutane does not change eggs or sperm, or hang around for future pregnancies).

MOST COMMON REACTIONS

Chapped lips – Apply plain petroleum jelly generously and frequently. Start doing this preventively before you start Accutane.

Dry skin and itching can occur over various parts of the body – Use a moisturizer daily to all dry areas and limit soap.

Sun sensitivity (sun burn more easily) - wear sunscreen, hat/visors, clothing and seek shade. No tanning beds!

Mild nosebleeds caused by drying of mucous membranes – Apply plain petroleum carefully to inside of nose and use a humidifier.

Inflammation of the eyelids, dry eyes, and eye irritation may develop (which rarely can become permanent) – Contact your doctor. Therapy depends on severity of irritation.

Joint and muscle pain – Contact your doctor if pain is bothersome. Ibuprofen is usually the recommend treatment. If severe, seek emergency care.

Rash, temporary hair thinning – Contact your doctor for advise.

Peeling of palms and soles – Lubricate your skin with a good moisturizer.

Temporary increased triglycerides and cholesterol.

More serious reported adverse events, but no causal relation established in all:

Psychiatric changes (depression/suicidal thoughts)

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (ulcerative colitis and Crohn's Disease)

Increased blood sugar/diabetes

Pseudotumor cerebri (increased pressure in the brain)

ringing of the ears and/or hearing loss

Liver damage/liver failure

Osteoporosis/Hyperostosis/Osteopenia

Vision changes (decrease in night or color vision, and other vision problems)

Decreased red and white blood cells

Signs of an allergic reaction (hives, swelling, breathing problems)

Premature closure of growth plates (stunting growth)

STOP ACCUTANE and contact your doctor if you have any of the above side effects or any complications.

PLEASE NOTE :

Accutane has been FDA-approved for acne for almost 40 years. We as dermatologists are very familiar with this remarkable medicine and feel very comfortable with it.

The beauty of Accutane is that it is a short term treatment (usually five months) that gives long term results. The medicine has a short half life; so it is completely out of the body one month after finishing.

Taking Accutane is like overdosing on vitamin A (although overdosing on vitamin A is more dangerous and should not be tried); so the side effects are those that would be seen with hypervitaminosis A but more tolerable. All the many years of vitamin A research add to the comfort level of doctors and researchers who use Accutane. Note that (aside from birth defects) the side effects are mostly “nuisance” side effects (not serious). Also, stopping Accutane causes blood levels to go down rapidly and thus any side effects go away quickly.

We are aware that there is a lot of bad media information regarding Accutane and a lot of misinformation on the internet. When searching the internet, please go only to reputable sites. And one more bit of reassuring information: a lot of dermatologists have put their own children on Accutane.