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5-Fluorouracil

5-Fluorouracil (AKA “5-FU, Efudex or Carac”) is used to treat precancerous and cancerous growths, affecting the outer layers of skin, caused by aging or sun damage.

How it works

The active ingredient fluorouracil belongs to a group of medicines called anti-cancer medicines (also called antineoplastic or cytotoxic medicines) that are applied to the skin. It works by destroying precancerous and cancerous cells, while having little effect on normal cells. This medicine is available only with a doctor's prescription.

Before you start to use it tell your doctor if you have allergies to any other medicines, foods, dyes or preservatives.

How will I look?

Expect your appearance to look worse and to feel uncomfortable while treatment is in progress. Although the skin seems to be worse, it is a sign that the medication is working. Sometimes it can take several weeks after treatment has stopped before you see any improvement in your condition.

When Efudex is applied to the skin, the following usually happens:

- Redness of the affected area (generally within 3 to 5 days).
- Then blistering, peeling, and cracking (within 11 to 14 days) with occasional open sores and some discomfort.
- The treated skin will flake away.
- Some redness of the skin will continue for some time after the medicine is stopped. Scarring is not expected

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the office