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## Benzoyl Peroxide For Treatment of Acne

### What Do Benzoyl Peroxide Skin Products Do?

Benzoyl Peroxide (Benzac, Benzagel, Clearasil Desquam, Benzamycin Gel and others) is applied to the skin to treat mild to moderate acne. Generic benzoyl peroxide products are available.

### What Should My Health Care Professional Know Before I Use Benzoyl Peroxide?

They need to know if you have any of these conditions: asthma, eczema, seborrheic dermatitis, skin abrasions, sunburn, an unusual or allergic reaction to benzoic acid, cinnamon, parabens, sulfites, other medicines, foods, dyes, or preservatives, pregnant or trying to get pregnant and breastfeeding.

### How Should I Use This Medicine?

- Benzoyl peroxide products are for external use only--do not take by mouth.
- Follow the directions on the prescription label.
- Do not apply to raw or irritated skin.
- Avoid getting medicine in your eyes, lips, nose, mouth, or other sensitive areas.

**For cream, gel or lotion:** Before applying, wash affected area with a gentle cleanser and pat dry. Apply enough medication to cover the area and rub in gently.

**For shaving cream:** Wet area to be shaved. Apply a small amount and gently rub over entire area. Shave, rinse area, and then pat dry.

**For cleansing bar, lotion, or liquid:** Use to wash affected areas.

**For face mask:** Before applying, wash affected area with a gentle cleanser and pat dry. Using a circular motion, apply a thin layer of the mask evenly over the affected area. Allow mask to dry for 15-25 minutes. Rinse mask off using warm water and then pat dry.

### **What If I Miss A Dose?**

If you miss a dose, apply as soon as possible and then continue with your regular schedule. Do not use extra doses, or use for a longer period of time than directed by your prescriber or health care professional.

### **What Other Medicines Can Interact With Benzoyl Peroxide?**

- adapalene (Differin™)
- isotretinoin (Accutane)
- topical antibiotics: clindamycin (Cleocin-T) or erythromycin (EryDerm, Erygel, Erythrostatin, Staticin)
- salicylic acid or sulfur containing products
- tretinoin (Retin A)

These medicines are sometimes prescribed to be used with benzoyl peroxide. Tell your prescriber or health care professional about all other skin preparations, prescription and nonprescription, you are using. These may affect the way your medicine works. Check before stopping or starting any of your medicines.

### **What Side Effects May I Notice From Using Benzoyl Peroxide?**

Side effects that you should report to your prescriber or health care professional as soon as possible: -severe burning, itching, reddening, crusting, or swelling of the treated areas

Side effects that usually do not require medical attention (report to your prescriber or health care professional if they continue or are bothersome): increased sensitivity to the sun, mild burning or stinging, red, inflamed, and irritated skin (the skin may peel after a few days).

### **What Do I Need To Watch For While I Use Benzoyl Peroxide?**

Your acne may get worse during the first few weeks of treatment with benzoyl peroxide, and then start to improve. It may take 8 to 12 weeks before you see the full beneficial effect. If you do not see any improvement within 4-6 weeks, call your prescriber or health care professional.

Once you see a decrease in your acne, you may need to continue to use benzoyl peroxide products to control it.

Do not wash areas of skin treated with benzoyl peroxide for at least 1 hour after applying the medicine. If you experience very dry and peeling skin or skin irritation, check with your prescriber or health care professional.

Do not use the following products on the same areas that you are treating with benzoyl peroxide, unless otherwise directed by your prescriber or health care professional:

- medicated cosmetics
- cosmetics that dry the skin (especially products that contain alcohol)
- rough soaps or cleansers

- any other acne preparation or skin treatment.

If you use these products in combination with benzoyl peroxide they can increase the risk of skin irritation.

Benzoyl peroxide can increase sensitivity of the skin to sun or UV light. Keep out of the sun, or wear protective clothing outdoors and use a sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher). Do not use sun lamps or sun tanning beds or booths.

Benzoyl peroxide products may bleach hair or colored fabrics. Avoid getting the medication on your clothes.

### **Where Can I Keep My Medicine?**

- Keep out of the reach of children.
- Store products at controlled room temperature between (68 degrees-77 degreesF).
- Throw away any unused medication after the expiration date.

This information should not be used as substitute for the medical care and advice of your child's physician. Health related topics found on the Andorra Pediatrics web site should not be used for diagnosing purposes or be substituted for medical advice. As with any new or ongoing treatment, always consult your professional healthcare provider before making any changes in treatment or beginning any new treatment. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office.