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## Clindamycin cream for bacterial vaginosis (Dalacin)

Clindamycin cream is used to treat bacterial vaginosis.

Use one applicatorful at bedtime. It is usual for a course of treatment to last 3-7 nights.

The most common side-effect is mild itching/irritation.

### About clindamycin cream

Type of medicine	An antibiotic cream
Used for	Treatment of bacterial vaginosis
Also called	Dalacin®
Available as	Cream to use in the vagina

**Bacterial vaginosis** is a common condition. It is a bacterial infection of the vagina and is caused by an overgrowth of normal bacteria. The main symptom is a vaginal discharge, often with a noticeable fishy smell. The infection may clear without treatment, or it can be treated with an antibiotic cream such as clindamycin. Clindamycin cream is applied into the vagina using an applicator.

Clindamycin is a medicine which is also available as a skin preparation for the treatment of acne, and as capsules to take by mouth to treat serious infections. There are two separate medicine leaflets available which provide more information about these uses of clindamycin, called [Clindamycin skin preparations for acne](#) and [Clindamycin capsules for infection](#).

## Before using clindamycin cream

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine may only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start using clindamycin cream, it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding. (Although clindamycin is not known to be harmful to a baby, it is still important that you tell your doctor if you are expecting or breastfeeding a baby.)
- If you have any bowel problems which cause you to have diarrhoea.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine or a skin preparation.
- If you are taking any other medicines. This includes medicines you have bought without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.

## How to use clindamycin cream

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. The manufacturer's leaflet will give you more information about clindamycin, and it will also explain how to use the cream and applicator.
- Use clindamycin cream exactly as your doctor tells you to. It is for use in the vagina only.
- Use one applicatorful (approximately 5 grams) of cream in the vagina at bedtime. Your doctor will tell you how many days you should use the cream for – a course of treatment usually lasts for 3–7 consecutive days.

- If you forget to use the cream, use it as soon as you remember. If you do not remember until the following day, use the cream as normal for your next dose (do not 'double up' the amount of cream you use). Use the cream for the correct number of days in total.

## **How to fill the applicator and use the cream**

1. Remove the cap from the tube of cream.
2. Attach one of the disposable applicators to the tube of cream (the applicator will screw on to the tube).
3. Squeeze the tube of cream gently to fill the applicator. When the plunger on the applicator stops moving, the applicator is full.
4. Unscrew the applicator from the tube, and replace the cap on to the tube.
5. Lie on your back and insert the applicator into your vagina. Insert it as far as is comfortable for you.
6. Gently push on the plunger of the applicator to empty the cream into your vagina. Then remove the applicator and throw it away (it can be wrapped in toilet paper and disposed of in a waste bin).
7. Wash your hands afterwards.

## **Getting the most from your treatment**

- Even if you feel your infection has cleared up, keep using the cream until the course is finished (unless you are told to stop by your doctor). This is to prevent the infection from coming back.
- Sexual intercourse during treatment for a vaginal infection is not recommended. Also, clindamycin cream can cause damage to condoms and caps (diaphragms), so you should not rely on these for contraception during treatment or for three days after using the cream.
- Some women develop thrush (redness and itching around the vagina) after a course of antibiotics. If you think you have thrush, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for advice.

## Can clindamycin cream cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below contains some of the most common ones associated with clindamycin when used in the vagina. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your cream. The unwanted effects often improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

<b>Very common clindamycin cream side-effects (these affect more than 1 in 10 people)</b>	<b>What can I do if I experience this?</b>
Irritation and itching	This should improve as your infection is treated and you get used to the cream
<b>Common clindamycin cream side-effects (these affect fewer than 1 in 10 people)</b>	<b>What can I do if I experience this?</b>
Diarrhoea	If this happens and it is severe, contact your doctor for further advice before you apply any more of the cream
Tummy (abdominal) cramps	Try using heat pads or a hot water bottle to ease any discomfort
Vaginal thrush, vaginal discharge	If you think you have another type of fungal or bacterial infection, let your doctor know

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the cream, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for further advice.

## How to store clindamycin cream

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.

- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.

## Important information about all medicines

Never use more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else might have swallowed some of this cream by accident, go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

If you buy any medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are suitable to take with your other medicines.

If you are having an operation or any dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are using.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine, ask your pharmacist.

If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

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## Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Dalacin® Cream 2%](#); Pfizer Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated August 2022.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 87th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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