

Tazarotene for psoriasis (Zorac)

Apply a thin layer of tazarotene gel each evening before going to bed.

Remember to wash your hands well after using the gel. This will help prevent accidentally getting it on other areas of your skin, which could cause irritation.

About tazarotene

Type of medicine	A topical retinoid (similar to vitamin A)
Used for	Small areas of plaque psoriasis in adults
Also called	Zorac®
Available as	Gel

Tazarotene is a gel which is applied to the skin to treat plaque [psoriasis](#). Psoriasis is a condition where red scaly patches develop on your skin, called plaques. Some of the most common areas affected are over your elbows and knees and the lower part of your back. The patches may vary in size from time to time and can be itchy. Treatment for psoriasis aims to clear the plaques as much as possible.

Psoriasis is caused by cells in the outer layer of your skin multiplying faster than normal. This causes the older and dead skin cells to build up on the surface of your skin, causing the red scaly patches. Tazarotene works by slowing the overproduction of your skin cells which eases the inflamed, scaly areas.

Before using tazarotene

To make sure this is the right treatment for you, before you start using tazarotene it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby or breastfeeding.
- If you are taking or using any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.

How to use tazarotene

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about applying tazarotene and will provide you with a full list of the side-effects which you could experience from using it.
- Tazarotene gel is available in two strengths. Your doctor will probably prescribe the lower-strength gel for you at first to see how your skin reacts, and then may increase the strength if this is necessary. This allows your doctor to make sure that you have the strength that helps your condition but also reduces the risk of skin irritation.
- Apply a thin layer of gel before going to bed each night. Apply it only to the areas of your skin which are affected. Remember to wash your hands straightaway afterwards to make sure you don't get the gel into your eyes or on any healthy areas of your skin by accident.
- Do not use the gel on more than 10% of your body area (this is roughly equivalent to the total skin area of one arm). Do not use the gel on your face, scalp, armpits or behind your elbows and knees.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Try to keep your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your doctor can check on your progress.

- If your skin becomes very dry or irritated, it may help to use a moisturiser but do this at least an hour before using tazarotene. It is recommended that you do not use any moisturisers or cosmetics for at least an hour after applying tazarotene gel.
- Do not cover any areas of skin that have been treated with tazarotene with a dressing or a bandage.
- It is likely that your doctor will suggest a course of treatment of up to three months. You should start to see an improvement in your skin within a week or so, and this improvement will continue for several weeks. You should continue to apply the gel regularly for as long as you have been recommended in order to get the full benefit.
- Tazarotene could harm an unborn baby so it is important that you do not become pregnant while you are using the gel. Please make sure you have discussed with your doctor which types of contraception are recommended for you, as some hormonal contraceptives (such as the 'mini pill') are not suitable.
- Your skin may become more sensitive to sunlight than normal while you are using tazarotene. Try to avoid sitting out in the sun and do not use sunbeds.

Can tazarotene 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 tazarotene. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with the medicine. 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.

<p>Very common tazarotene side-effects (these affect more than 1 in 10 people)</p>	<p>What can I do if I experience this?</p>
<p>Skin itching, irritation, redness, a burning sensation,</p>	<p>Try applying a thinner layer of gel and make sure you avoid getting the gel on any healthy areas of your skin. If this continues, speak with your doctor</p>
<p>Common tazarotene side-effects (these affect fewer than 1 in 10 people)</p>	<p>What can I do if I experience this?</p>
<p>Peeling, rash or worsening of your condition</p>	<p>Try applying a thinner layer of gel and make sure you avoid getting the gel on any healthy areas of your skin. If this continues, speak with your doctor</p>

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

How to store tazarotene

- 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

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

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

This preparation is for use on the skin only. If someone swallows some of it 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.

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](#).

Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Zorac® gel](#); Allergan Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated July 2018.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 87th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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