



Accutane (isotretinoin)

Isotretinoin is a medication that is taken by mouth to treat moderate to severe acne. Typically, it is used once other acne treatments have not worked, such as various creams and oral antibiotics. Usually isotretinoin is taken for approximately 6 months, although the length of treatment can vary. Isotretinoin is the closest thing we have to a “cure” for acne; It is the only treatment where the effects on acne last for years after the medication is finished. While every patient’s acne will clear with this medication, in a small percentage the acne may come back eventually (though it will be much less severe) and may require additional acne treatments (many patients who have previously done a course of Accutane prefer to do a second course because they’ve seen how effective it was the first time compared to other acne treatments).

Common Side Effects (and how to manage them)

- Chapped lips: Use lip balm frequently. (We recommend Dr. Dan’s Cortibalm Lip Balm which can be purchased at the front desk)
- Dry skin: Use a gentle soap and moisturize frequently (especially if your skin is itchy).
 - Recommended face cleansers: Neutrogena ultra gentle foaming or creamy wash; CeraVe foaming or hydrating cleanser; Cetaphil daily facial or gentle skin cleanser; Clarity ultra gentle cleanser.
 - Recommended face/body moisturizers: Cetaphil Cream, CeraVe cream,
 - Recommended body moisturizers: Cerave Cream, Cetaphil Cream, Aveeno Eczema Therapy Cream,
- Joint/muscle aches: If you need to take over the counter pain reliever we recommend using Advil (ibuprofen) or Aleve (naproxen). Avoid taking Tylenol (acetaminophen).
- Nosebleeds: Prevent by applying Aquaphor or Vaseline to the inside of your nose
- Dry eyes (especially if you wear contacts): Use lubricating eye drops.
- Sun sensitivity: Minimize sun exposure. Wear SPF 30 or higher sunscreen daily and if outside for an extended amount of time make sure to reapply!
 - Recommended facial sunscreens: (Cetaphil Daily Facial Moisturizer with SPF 50, CeraVe AM SPF 30, Aveeno Positively Radiant SPF 30, Neutrogena Clear Face SPF 55, Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Dry-Touch Sunscreen, Elta MD Clear SPF 46)

During your course

- Stop all other acne medications during your Accutane course. (Including antibiotics, prescription creams, and over the counter acne washes). Use a gentle soap and gentle moisturizer.
- Avoid vitamins with high doses of Vitamin A (ok if it contains less than 5,000IU of Vitamin A)
- Avoid waxing unwanted hair. Tweezing, threading and shaving are safe to continue.
- Do not have any chemical peels, laser treatments, body piercings, tattoos, or elective surgical procedures while on Accutane or for 1 month following completion.
- Do not donate blood while on Accutane.
- Avoid alcohol use while on Accutane.
- It’s ok if you run out of your medication before your next appointment. Accutane stays in your system for several days and missing a few days (or even weeks) will not impact the final outcome! (other than lengthening your course by the numbers of days you miss)



Monthly labs

While you are free to have your labs drawn anywhere, most of our patients do theirs at the lab in the building next door. Their hours are Monday-Friday 7:30am-6:00pm and Saturday from 8:30am-12:00pm. Their address is 15300 SW Freeway Suite 200; (281) 274-6600. You should be fasting when you have your labs drawn (if not we might have to recheck them if your cholesterol is elevated)

Rare side effects:

-Concerning: severe nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, unusually severe headaches especially if accompanied by vomiting or vision changes, mood changes, personality changes, or depression -- contact your doctor immediately!

Rite Care Pharmacy

Unless you specifically request a different pharmacy, we will send your prescription to Rite Care Pharmacy. You should be able to get your prescription for 5\$ a month through this pharmacy; You can arrange for them to mail your prescription to you each month! It is located just across Highway 59. Their address is 15271 Southwest Freeway Sugarland, TX 77478 and phone number is (713) 955-5700. They are open Monday-Friday 9:00am-6:00pm.

Females only

For females the most serious side effect is severe birth defects if you become pregnant while on Accutane (isotretinoin). There is no long term risk of birth defects after you finish your course and it has no effect on your ability to become pregnant in the future. Isotretinoin is regulated by the iPledge program to help prevent accidental pregnancy while on this medicine, and for one month after you stop the medication. This program requires you to use two forms of birth control to prevent pregnancy. If you are not sexually active, abstinence will be your form of birth control.

iPledge

After being entered into the iPledge system by our office, please look out for a letter delivered to the address you provided to us with your **user name and password**. Make sure you register in the iPledge system as soon as you receive this information in the mail. After each monthly appointment, you will need to log on to iPledge and complete the required questions prior to getting your prescription.

Pregnancy tests: 7 Day Window

Monthly pregnancy tests are required by iPledge. The day you get your pregnancy test (included in your blood work), is Day 1 of your **7 day window**, which is the window of time you are allowed to pick up your prescription. If your window closes before you can get the medication, you will need to have another pregnancy test drawn. If you have not been contacted by our office with your labs results by day **4 of your window**, please call us during working hours to avoid missing your window.

