

Patient information

Short Contact Dithranol

Dermatology Department

Dithranol is a man made chemical originally obtained from tree bark extract, and is used to treat psoriasis. There may be alternative treatments available, please ask your doctor or nurse to discuss these with you.

The aim of Dithranol is to improve your skin condition.

If you have no treatment for your psoriasis, then it will probably not improve.

Dithranol will be applied to your areas (plaques) of psoriasis in the bathroom and it will be left on for 20 to 30 minutes. The nurse in clinic will show you how to apply it and help you. The nurse will provide you with a gown and towels to prevent staining of your own clothes. You will start on a low strength, which will be increased weekly until your psoriasis clears.

After 20-30 minutes, remove the Dithranol by applying bath oil or soap substitute to a disposable wipe and carefully wipe the ointment off. The nurse will help you remove it from your back.

You will then take a shower and we advise you to apply moisturiser to your skin at the end of treatment.

Often TLO1 phototherapy (see leaflet PIF 634) is given before Dithranol ointment is applied as a combination treatment for your psoriasis.

Advice using Dithranol

Do:

- Apply Dithranol to plaques of psoriasis only.
- Remove Dithranol before having a shower.
- Be aware Dithranol stains everything it comes into contact with including clothes, baths, walls, floors and fabrics.
- Be aware that Dithranol will stain your skin a purple/brownish colour as the psoriasis clears. This will gradually disappear after stopping treatment.
- Use plastic gloves / spatula to avoid staining of your fingernails.
- Report any signs of skin burning, redness or soreness to nursing staff.

Do not:

- Apply Dithranol to the face, genitalia, armpits, and groin, scalp or skin folds, because these areas are sensitive and will burn.
- Apply Dithranol in or near the eyes - if it does come into contact with your eyes, wash thoroughly with water and inform the nurse.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further information

Lynn Owens
Advanced Nurse Practitioner
Phototherapy Unit (off Ward 4)
2nd Level
Alexandra Wing
Broadgreen Hospital
Tel: 0151 282 6892
Text phone number: 18001 0151 282 6892

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