

ISOTRETINOIN (CLARAVIS, ABSORICA, ZENATANE)

Your provider has prescribed Isotretinoin for the treatment of your acne. This handout includes important information regarding the use of this medication, its potential side effects and precautions you should take while on this medication. Please keep refer to it as a reference and call you provider if you have questions.

TAKING YOUR MEDICATION

Take isotretinoin exactly as it is prescribed. The amount (i.e., dose) you take is specifically calculated based on your body weight and may change during your treatment. If you miss a dose, skip it. **Do not take more than one dose of Isotretinoin at the same time.**

SIDE EFFECTS

The most commonly reported side effects include dryness of the skin, eyes, nose and mouth; tenderness/pain in the bones or joints; and decreased energy levels. Tell your provider if you experience these symptoms and they are severe, or do not go away.

More severe, though less common, side effects include conjunctivitis (similar in appearance to “pink eye”); rash with fever blisters; blisters on legs, arms or face and/or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, eyes, or peeling skin; severe stomach, chest, or bowel pain; trouble swallowing or painful swallowing; new or worsening heartburn; diarrhea; rectal bleeding; back or joint pain; vision problems; and headaches, sometimes associated with nausea or vision changes. **Stop isotretinoin and call your provider right away if you experience any of these side effects.**

In some cases, isotretinoin can cause serious mental health problems, such as depression, psychosis (seeing or hearing things that are not real), or suicide. **Stop isotretinoin and call your provider immediately if you or a family member notices any of the following symptoms:** sadness or crying spells; loss of interest in activities; changes in appetite or weight; withdrawal from friends/family; trouble concentrating; irritability or angry outbursts; excessive sleep or difficulty sleeping; acting on dangerous impulses; feelings of worthlessness or guilt.

PRECAUTIONS

Exercise the following precautions while taking this medication to ensure maximum effectiveness of treatment and to help minimize the incidence of side effects.

- **Minimize exposure to the sun and ultraviolet light.** Isotretinoin causes skin to be more sensitive to the light. Limit exposure and be sure to use sunscreen while taking this medication.
- **Do not donate blood while you are taking and for one month after stopping isotretinoin.** If a pregnant woman receives your blood, her baby may be exposed to isotretinoin, which can cause birth defects.
- **Do not take other medications/supplements with Isotretinoin without first discussing them with your provider.** Discuss any medications/supplements you are taking with your provider before starting isotretinoin. Vitamin A supplements, multi-vitamins containing Vitamin A, Fish Oil, St. John’s Wort, sports and protein supplements should be avoided while taking this medication. Alcoholic beverages should also be avoided.
- **Do not have cosmetic hair reduction or skin smoothing procedures while you are using and for at least six months after you finish taking Isotretinoin.** Isotretinoin can increase the risk of scarring from these procedures.
- **Do not share your medication with other people.** Isotretinoin can cause birth defects and other serious health problems.
- **Female patients must use two forms of contraception while taking and for at least one month after stopping isotretinoin to avoid the risk of birth defects in pregnancy.**
- **Female patients with infants should not breastfeed while taking and for at least one month after stopping isotretinoin.**
- **Do not drive at night until you know whether isotretinoin has affected your vision.** Isotretinoin may decrease your ability to see in the dark.