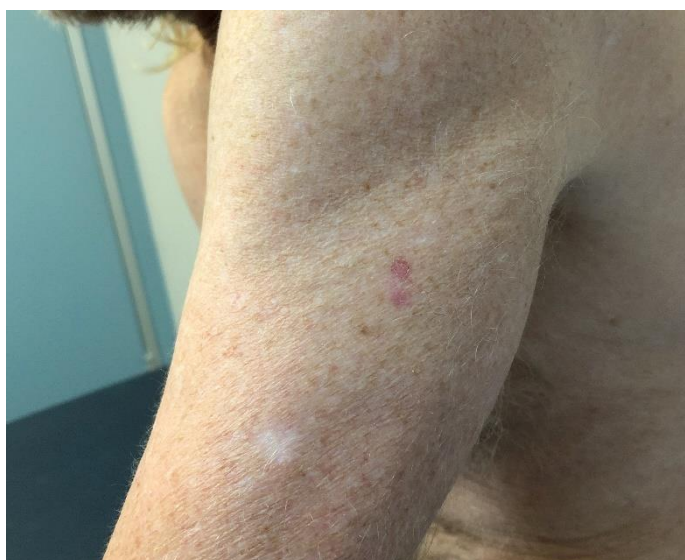


5% Imiquimod

ALDARA



Imiquimod is an immunotherapy cream utilizing your own immune system to target and destroy cancerous skin cells.



What is it used for?

The mainstay of treatment for Imiquimod is to treat superficial basal cell carcinomas of the skin.

Other ways to treat superficial BCCs include:

- Excision
- Serial curettage
- Photodynamic Therapy

It can also be used to treat solar keratosis / pre cancerous cells in the outer layer of skin. While there are more effective treatment options some people are unable to use these.

Superficial basal carcinoma is a very common skin cancer in Australia.

The use of Imiquimod to treat these superficial low risk lesions mean some patients can avoid surgery. This is especially important on cosmetic sensitive areas.

Clearance rates of BCCs after a six week treatment of imiquimod range from 82-88%.^{1,2}

How to apply?

Apply the cream in a thin layer to the targeted areas.

For superficial BCC apply to the treatment area including a 1cm margin around the lesion daily, 5 days a week for 6 weeks.

For solar keratosis apply to an area no larger than 25cm² 3 x a week for for a 4 week cycle. This is often repeated.

You may find that areas you haven't applied react – this field effect is common.

Apply at least 60 mins before bed to avoid movement of the cream on unwanted areas.

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What happens next?



The reaction may take several days to take effect. By the end of the second week it is often starting to show redness, swelling and crusting.



Side effects are common and include redness, swelling, scabbing / crusting, itching, burning and headache. Very occasionally a short course of steroid cream is required but this will be directed by your skin doctor at The Skin Cancer Clinic Claremont. Send clinical images to aduthie@gpsonbayview.com.au if any concerns.



Simple paracetamol can be used if needed.



It expected to settle within a week of cessation of cream and should leave no scar once the redness has resolved.



Need to call the clinic (9217 6000) There have been reported cases of a severe reaction with swollen eyes and lips. Do not apply any further cream and call the clinic. An infection may also occur rarely. If there is increasing pain, swelling or weeping inform the clinic.

Notes

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1. Geisse J, Caro I, Lindholm J, Golitz L, Stampone P, Owens M. [Imiquimod 5% cream for the treatment of superficial basal cell carcinoma: results from two phase III, randomized, vehicle-controlled studies.](#) J Am Acad Dermatol 2004 May;50(5):722-33
2. Thomson J, Hogan S, Leonardi-Bee J, Williams HC, Bath-Hextall FJ. Interventions for basal cell carcinoma of the skin. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2020, Issue 11. Art. No.: CD003412. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD003412.pub3. Accessed 08 August 2023.