

Clinical oncology

Efudix (5-FU) cream for Anal Intraepithelial Neoplasia (AIN)

What is AIN?

Anal intraepithelial neoplasia (AIN) is abnormal cells in the skin around or just inside the anus. It is important to monitor AIN as there is a small risk that it can transform into anal cancer over many years. Many people with AIN have no symptoms, but it can be uncomfortable with soreness, itching or occasionally bleeding.

How is AIN treated?

Some people will simply have monitoring of their AIN. In some cases the body can completely heal itself from AIN, particularly the first stage of AIN (AIN1). However, for those who have troublesome symptoms, some treatment may be recommended. The most commonly used treatments are surgical removal, laser treatment or skin ointments such as Efudix.

What is Efudix?

Efudix is a cream containing an anti-cancer drug (5-Fluorouracil or 5-FU) that is useful in the treatment of some pre-cancerous conditions and skin cancers.

When you are prescribed Efudix

- Apply the cream at night time and then wash it off in the shower next morning for 5-7 days.
- Then stop using the cream for approximately 5 days to give the skin a rest.
- Then use the cream again for another 5-7 days as in the first bullet point.
- Continue in this way as instructed by your doctor (normally for 3 months).

How to apply the cream

Using your fingers, rub a thin layer of the cream into the abnormal area of skin until it has been absorbed. You can leave the skin exposed to the air.

Always wash your hands immediately after applying the cream as it can irritate the skin of your fingers (or wear gloves to apply it).

Keep the cream well away from your eyes. Do not rub your eyes with fingers that have been used to apply the cream.

Avoid sexual contact with a partner after the cream has been applied as this may cause irritation of their skin.



Side effects of the treatment

After a few days the abnormal area will go red. There may be some soreness. Once the reaction has started, continue to apply the cream. If at any time the reaction is really unpleasant and sore, stop the treatment. If the reaction does not settle down and you are worried, contact your consultant's secretary on the telephone number below.

Your follow-up appointment

We will arrange a follow-up appointment in 3 - 4 months. You should stop using the cream 4 weeks before the appointment to allow the reaction to settle down and for the area to be re-assessed properly.

At your follow-up appointment the consultant will:

- Check if the cream has worked.
- Advise whether you should have another course of Efudix.
- Advise if a different treatment would be more appropriate.

If you have any problems or worries, please contact:

Dr Lavin's secretary - Tracy O'Hara on **0161 446 8583**

Prof Saunders' secretary - Rebecca McHugh on **0161 446 3357**

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net**

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.



Contact The Christie Hotline for
urgent support and specialist advice
The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week