

Tacrolimus 0.03% ointment

What is tacrolimus ointment?

Tacrolimus ointment is a medicine that stops the release of a substance called calcineurin and prevents inflammation. Tacrolimus ointment is manufactured at Perth Children's Hospital (PCH) and is only available from the pharmacy with a doctor's prescription.

What is it for?

Tacrolimus ointment is used to treat and prevent moderate to severe atopic eczema. It is generally prescribed when other treatments, such as corticosteroids, have been tried and proved ineffective.

How to use this medication?

It is important that this medication is applied exactly as prescribed by the doctor to obtain the best results and to minimise possible side effects. Do not give this medication to other people.

Tacrolimus ointment should be applied thinly to the affected area(s) of the skin as directed by your child's doctor. It is usually prescribed twice a day until the eczema has improved. The doctor may then reduce the frequency to once a day.

Tacrolimus ointment is for short term use and should only be applied for as long as directed.

Apply the ointment as follows:

1. Wash and dry your hands.
2. Remove the lid on the jar.
3. Remove a small amount of ointment from the jar using a spatula or cotton tip.
4. Apply a thin layer of the ointment to completely cover the affected skin.
5. Rub in gently and completely with the fingertips.
6. Replace the lid on the jar.
7. Wash your hands after applying the ointment.

What to do if a dose is missed

If you forget a dose, apply the ointment as soon as possible and then continue your normal routine.

Storing the medication

Store below 25°C.



It is important to keep tacrolimus ointment locked away out of reach of children. Do not keep the ointment in the bathroom, near the kitchen sink or in other damp, warm places because this may make it less effective.

Use of other medication

Tacrolimus ointment may interact with some other medicines, so it is important to advise your doctor or pharmacist before giving any other medication. This includes medicines you buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Important information

- Tacrolimus ointment is for short term use only.
- Tacrolimus ointment is absorbed in small amounts through the skin when given to people. There have been isolated reports of lymphoma or skin cancer in people who were using tacrolimus ointment, but no causal link has yet been shown between tacrolimus ointment use and the development of these conditions.
- Avoid excessive exposure to sunlight as there has been a small increase in the incidence of some skin cancers in patients using tacrolimus ointment. Reduce exposure to sunlight by wearing a hat, light loose clothing and apply SPF 30+ sunscreen on exposed skin areas.
- Tacrolimus ointment must not be used on skin that is infected, severely inflamed or broken.
- Tacrolimus ointment can be used at the same time as other skin products such as moisturisers and sunscreens. If another product is to be applied to the skin, wait until the tacrolimus ointment is completely absorbed and there is no residue left on the skin. After a bath or shower, apply the moisturiser first before the tacrolimus ointment.
- Care should be taken to ensure tacrolimus ointment does not get in the eyes, mouth or inside of the nose. If the ointment is accidentally applied to any of these areas, wipe it off and rinse well.

Possible side effects

Side effects may occur while using tacrolimus ointment. Some of these are not serious and will go away with time such as:

- a rash, irritation, itchiness, pain or numbness where the ointment is applied
- an infection where the ointment is applied
- acne or reddening of the skin.

It is most common to get burning sensation at the application site, but it improves as atopic dermatitis improves.

Contact your child's doctor as soon as possible if you are worried about any side effects or if a new spot, freckle or mole appears or changes to an existing one occurs.

Commercially available dosage forms and strengths

Tacrolimus 0.03% ointment 50g.

The PCH Pharmacy will advise you if they manufacture any additional dosage forms.

If you have any concerns, contact your child's doctor or the PCH Pharmacy Department.

- Dispensary: 6456 0190 – select option 2
- Paediatric Medicines Information Service: 6456 0190 – select option 1

In case of overdose or poisoning contact the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26.



Government of **Western Australia**
Child and Adolescent Health Service



Child and Adolescent Health Service
15 Hospital Avenue, Nedlands, WA, 6009.
Telephone: (08) 6456 2222
Produced by: Pharmacy
Ref: 685 © CAHS 2017 Revised 2022

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

Disclaimer: This publication is for general education and information purposes. Contact a qualified healthcare professional for any medical advice needed.

© State of Western Australia, Child and Adolescent Health Service.