

## Uses

This medication is used to treat severe cystic acne (also known as nodular acne) that has not responded to other treatment (e.g., benzoyl peroxide or clindamycin applied to the skin or tetracycline or minocycline taken by mouth). It belongs to a class of drugs known as retinoids. It works by decreasing facial oil (sebum) production. High amounts of sebum can lead to severe acne. If left untreated, severe acne may cause permanent scarring.

## How to use Isotretinoin Capsule

Read the Medication Guide provided by your pharmacist before you start using isotretinoin and each time you get a refill. Read and sign a Patient Information/Informed Consent form before you start taking this medication. If you have any questions about isotretinoin, consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking the medication.

Swallow capsules whole. Do not crush or chew them. Isotretinoin is usually taken twice daily for 15-20 weeks, or as directed by your doctor. Directions for most generic forms of isotretinoin state that it should be taken with meals. However, the FDA has indicated that the Absorica brand may be taken with or without food.

## Side Effects

Dry lips and mouth, minor swelling of the eyelids or lips, crusty skin, nosebleeds, upset stomach, or thinning of hair may occur. If any of these effects persist or worsen, tell your doctor or pharmacist promptly.

To relieve dry mouth, suck on (sugarless) hard candy or ice chips, chew (sugarless) gum, drink water, or use a saliva substitute.

Remember that your doctor has prescribed this medication because he or she has judged that the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects.

Tell your doctor right away if you have any serious side effects, including: mental/mood changes (such as depression, anxiety, thoughts of suicide), tingling feeling in the skin, back/joint/muscle pain, signs of infection (e.g., fever, persistent sore throat), painful swallowing, peeling skin on palms/soles.

## Precautions

Before taking isotretinoin, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or to vitamin A-related drugs (other retinoids such as tretinoin); or if you have any other allergies. This product may contain

inactive ingredients (such as soybean, parabens), which can cause allergic reactions or other problems. Some people who are allergic to peanuts may also be allergic to soy. Talk to your pharmacist for more details.

Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, especially of: diabetes, family or personal history of high blood fats (triglycerides), mental/mood problems (such as depression), liver disease, obesity, eating disorders (e.g., anorexia nervosa), alcohol abuse, pancreatitis, bone loss conditions (e.g., osteoporosis/osteomalacia, decreased bone density).

Do not donate blood while you are taking isotretinoin and for at least 1 month after you stop taking it.

This medication may make you more sensitive to the sun. Limit your time in the sun. Avoid tanning booths and sunlamps. Use sunscreen and wear protective clothing when outdoors.

#### Interactions

Drug interactions may change how your medications work or increase your risk for serious side effects. This document does not contain all possible drug interactions. Keep a list of all the products you use (including prescription/nonprescription drugs and herbal products) and share it with your doctor and pharmacist. Do not start, stop, or change the dosage of any medicines without your doctor's approval.

Some products that may interact with this drug are: tetracyclines (such as minocycline, tetracycline), vitamin A-type drugs (such as acitretin, bexarotene), vitamin A, drugs that cause bone loss (for example, anti-seizure drugs such as phenytoin, corticosteroids such as prednisone).

Tell your doctor when you start any new drug, and discuss if you should use additional reliable birth control. Also tell your doctor if you have any new spotting or breakthrough bleeding, because these may be signs that your birth control is not working well.