

TOPICAL FLUOROURACIL

(Efudex or Carac)

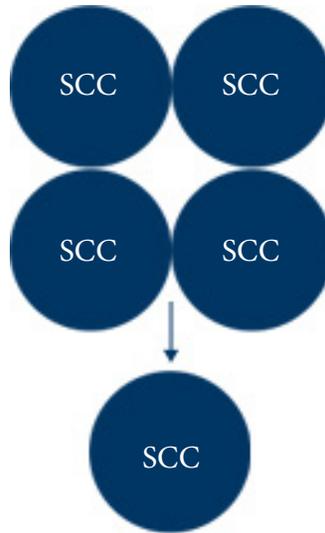
Actinic Keratosis (AKs) are precancerous lesions that will develop into squamous cell skin cancers (SCC) over time. The more precancers you have in an area, the higher your risk of skin cancer in that area.

Some precancers are visible- red, scaly, rough areas on the face, arms, hands. They are visible because your immune system is attacking them and trying to get rid of them. The immune system of the skin cannot completely get rid of precancers, so we need to help your body fight these. Most precancers are “hidden” – they are in the skin but have not yet become red and scaly. This means for every precancer we can see, there are 10 or more precancers in the surrounding area that we cannot see yet because your immune system has not yet seen and attacked them.

For patients with just a few precancers – we can easily treat these with “freezing” – cryotherapy – in the office. When patients have more than 15 in an area – freezing alone will miss some of the precancers. In these patients we use topical medicines to treat a broad area and kill precancers we can see and ones we cannot see yet.

Topical Fluorouracil (Efudex and Carac are brand names fluorouracil is the generic medicine and the active ingredient) allows us to treat a broad area and “reverse” some of the sun damage. While it will not completely eliminate the risk of skin cancer in an area, it can reduce the number of squamous cell skin cancers in an area by 75%. (Efudex does not work for basal skin cancers)

Squamous Cell Skin Cancer
[Before Efudex]



[After Efudex]

Up to 75% reduction in squamous cell skin cancers in the area treated.

*Efudex does not treat existing skin cancers, it destroys precancers (AKs) and prevents them from becoming skin cancers.

DON'T WORRY - IT WILL HEAL!



Shoulder- after 2 weeks of topical Fluorouracil – every red scaling area is a precancer that was killed. When your skin gets to this point- stop and clean the area with gentle soap and water in the shower and apply Vaseline to any open areas until it heals) about 10 days to heal after you stop).

HOW TO USE EFUDEX

Apply a thin film to an area of the body twice a day for two weeks (if you are using the brand name Carac – it is only once a day for two weeks). Wash your hands after applying to the area.

Mild Sun damage:

For patients with only a small number of precancers that are visible (10 on the whole face) you will apply Efudex to the entire face (forehead, temples, nose, cheeks, chin and ears) for two weeks.

Moderate to severe sun damage:

If you have a large number of precancers (15 or more) you should not treat the entire face at once – it will become too inflamed and uncomfortable. In this case treat small regions – for example treat the forehead and temples – twice a day for two weeks. Then let the area heal for two weeks (use just Vaseline to the open scabby areas). Once the area has healed, then pick another face region (the nose and ears) and treat with Efudex to this new region twice a day for two weeks.

Body Areas to treat

Scalp	Sides of Neck	Hands
Forehead	V of Chest	Arms
Eyebrows	Nose	Lips
Shins	Cheeks	Feet
	Ears	