



**Hydroquinone** is used for topical application in skin whitening formulas. It bleaches the skin by blocking melanin production (the darkening agent of skin).

It is most effectively used in a cream or lotion form topically applied to the skin. It should only be used short term and most creams last for approximately 4 months (or until the cream darkens). Results are usually seen 4 weeks after treatment has begun. It can take longer to see results in some people but if no change is noticeable after 3 months of use then you should stop use and see your practitioner.

## USUAL DAILY DOSES

Hydroquinone is made in various forms from 1% upwards. Your doctor will decide which strength is most appropriate for you

## HOW TO USE HYDROQUINONE

It is important to have clean and dry skin before applying your hydroquinone preparation. Then you apply a small amount to the areas required and rub in to the skin well. It should be applied BEFORE other skin preparations (e.g. everyday moisturiser or sunscreen)

Make sure you only apply to pigmented skin, as it will lighten normal skin as well

Do not apply near the eye, mouth or other mucous membranes.

Avoid using other medicated products in the same area (especially bleaching agents)

Use your hydroquinone preparation regularly until desired bleaching has occurred. After this only use to maintain results.

## MISSED DOSES

Your doctor or pharmacist will advise you but generally a missed dose should be given as soon as you remember but not if it is less than 6 hours before the next dose. DO NOT DOUBLE UP ON DOSES.

## PRECAUTIONS

Hydroquinone should not be used in pregnancy or breastfeeding.

## SIDE EFFECTS

Hydroquinone is generally very well tolerated but patch testing is always recommended as some people are very sensitive to hydroquinone. Some people may experience mild skin irritation e.g. burning, redness, rash or stinging. If you develop any of these discontinue use and see your doctor or pharmacist

## COMMON INGREDIENTS IN HYDROQUINONE CREAMS

Your doctor may add some of the following ingredients to your cream

- Hydrocortisone
- Kojic Acid
- Ascorbic Acid
- Salicylic acid
- Oleic acid just to name a few

It's important to discuss with your doctor or pharmacist if you're not sure why a particular ingredient has been included in your formulation

### TOP TIPS

- On first use apply the preparation to unbroken skin on the inner part of the arm and wait 24 hours to ensure an allergic reaction does not follow
- If the test area is itchy, red, puffy or blistering do not continue use and consult your doctor
- As Hydroquinone is a skin lightener it should only be used as directed on the dark spots (pigmented areas of skin)
- The preparation may make your skin more sensitive to sunlight so take precautions if heading outside
- Discontinue use at the beyond use date or when cream darkens
- Store away from light and decrease its exposure to air
- The effect of hydroquinone is reduced by exposure to ultraviolet light so it's important to wear sunscreen and keep treated areas out of the sun.

This material is for educational use only. It should not be used as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.