

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

For patients taking
NEOTIGASON® (acitretin)

Please read
carefully

What is Neotigason®

Neotigason® is an oral medication used to treat severe psoriasis and other severe disorders of the skin. Neotigason® contains the active ingredient acitretin and is available in 10mg and 25mg capsules. Neotigason® belongs to a group of medicines called retinoids, which are very similar to Vitamin A. Vitamin A, which we obtain from food, is important for the normal growth and development of the body, especially the skin.

Before you take Neotigason®

DO NOT TAKE NEOTIGASON® IF:



- **You are pregnant**, or intend to become pregnant during treatment or in the 3 years after stopping treatment.

The possibility that

you may be pregnant **MUST** be ruled out by you and your dermatologist before you start taking Neotigason®. A pregnancy test must be negative when performed within one week before beginning treatment.

- **You are breastfeeding.** Breastfeeding must be stopped before treatment begins.
- **You are taking** tetracycline antibiotics, Vitamin A or preparations containing Vitamin A or methotrexate.
- **You have had an allergic reaction** to Neotigason®, Vitamin A, other retinoids or any other ingredient contained in the Neotigason® capsule (refer to Consumer Medicine Information).
- **You have severe liver or kidney disease** or abnormally high fat levels in your blood.

You must use effective contraception

(preferably two complementary forms), without interruption for one month before, during and for at least 3 years after treatment. A combination hormonal contraceptive product or an intrauterine device should be used. It is recommended that a diaphragm or condom is also used. Low dose minipills (progesterone only) are not recommended.

How to take Neotigason®

Neotigason® is usually taken once daily with meals or with a glass of milk. Capsules should be swallowed whole. If you are female, you should wait until the second or third day of your next normal menstrual period before you start Neotigason® therapy.

If you forget to take Neotigason® and it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose when you are meant to. Otherwise, take it as soon as you remember and then go back to taking it as you would normally. Do **NOT** double the dose at the next dose time to make up for one you have missed.

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How to store Neotigason®

Neotigason® capsules should be kept in the blister pack until it is time to take them. The blister pack is best kept in a cool, dry place where the temperature stays below 25°C. Neotigason® should NOT be stored in a bathroom; near a sink; on a window sill or in the car. Neotigason® should be protected from light. Keep Neotigason® where children cannot reach it.

What to expect when taking Neotigason®

Once you start taking Neotigason®, you may notice the first signs of improvement during the first week but, more often, after 2 or 3 weeks. It may take 2 to 3 months before the full effect is seen. The affected skin will either peel off or gradually clear. Sometimes there will be more redness or itching at first, but this will normally improve as treatment continues.

Side effects are a possibility when taking Neotigason®. All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. With Neotigason®, you may notice dryness of the lips, mouth, nose, eyes and skin; thinning or peeling of the skin that was not previously affected, such as hands and feet; sticky skin; some hair loss; rash 'redness of the skin' or itchiness and flushing.

These side effects will probably stop after the dose of Neotigason® is lowered or stopped. The use of a moisturiser or petroleum jelly can be used to soften the lining of the nose, lips and the skin. Your skin may be more sensitive to sunburn while on Neotigason®, so avoid excessive sun exposure and apply sunscreen.

Tell your dermatologist if you notice any of the following and they worry you. Unusually severe or persistent headaches; nausea; diarrhoea; tenderness or stiffness in your joints or muscles or bones; fatigue; dizziness; sleepiness; mood changes; depression; male breast enlargement; water retention; gastritis; heartburn; changes in hearing; irregular menstrual bleeding; sore mouth or inflammation of the gums; taste disturbances.

Stop taking Neotigason® and see your dermatologist if you experience nausea; vomiting; headache; blurred vision or visual disturbances.

Do not be alarmed by the above-mentioned side effects list. You may not experience any of them.

Do not donate blood during Neotigason® treatment or for at least two years after stopping treatment.

Speak to your dermatologist if you are feeling unwell, do not understand something or have any questions about your treatment.

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