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2. Tazarotene

Tazarotene Cream, Gel, Lotion, and Foam

Generic name: tazarotene topical [*ta-ZAR-oh-teen*]

Brand names: [Arazlo](#), [Avage](#), [Fabior](#), [Tazorac](#)

Drug classes: [Topical acne agents](#), [Topical antipsoriatics](#)

Medically reviewed by [Carmen Pope, BPharm](#). Last updated on Jun 26, 2023.

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What is tazarotene topical?

Tazarotene topical is a type of retinoid derived from vitamin A that is available as a cream, gel, lotion, or foam.

Tazarotene may be used to treat conditions such as psoriasis and acne, or improve the appearance and texture of skin.

Different brands and strengths of tazarotene are approved for different uses, for example:

- Acne (Arazlo 0.045%, Fabior foam 0.1%, Tazorac cream 0.1% and Tazroac gel 0.05% and 0.1%, and generic tazarotene 0.1%)
- Antiaging (Avage 0.1% and generic tazarotene 0.1%)
- Plaque psoriasis (Tazorac cream 0.05% and 0.1% and Tazorac gel 0.05% and 0.1%).

Tazarotene topical works by slowing the overgrowth of skin cells and decreasing inflammation in conditions such as acne and psoriasis. When used in antiaging products it boosts collagen production to increase the thickness of the outer layers of skin, improving the appearance of fine lines and some skin discoloration.

Tazarotene will not eliminate or prevent wrinkles or restore more youthful skin. It will not repair sun damage or reverse the effects of photoaging.

Tazarotene is sometimes used off-label to treat other conditions as well.

Warnings

Tazarotene can cause birth defects. A pregnancy test should be conducted within 2 weeks of starting treatment and it should not be used in women who are pregnant. Women of childbearing potential should use effective birth control while using tazarotene to prevent pregnancy. Stop using tazarotene and tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant, if you stop using birth control, or if you miss a menstrual period.

You may get sunburned more easily while using tazarotene. Avoid sun, sunlamps, and tanning beds. Use sunscreen and wear clothing and eyewear that protects you from the sun. Some weather conditions, such as extremely cold or windy days, may also irritate the skin. Do not use it if you are also taking medications that increase photosensitivity, such as doxycycline.

Some people may experience excessive skin irritation when starting tazarotene treatment, such as increased redness, itchiness, burning, or peeling. If this occurs, stop using tazarotene until your skin improves or reduce the amount you put on or how frequently you apply it. Do not apply to eczema.

Assess pigmented areas of the face and neck before applying tazarotene. Do not apply to skin cancers including Lentigo maligna, a subtype of melanoma.

Tazarotene may cause harm if swallowed. If tazarotene cream is swallowed, call a doctor or poison control center right away.

Before taking this medicine

You should not use tazarotene topical if you are allergic to it or any of the inactive ingredients present in the product.

To make sure tazarotene is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- an allergic reaction to a skin product
- eczema, dermatitis, or other skin conditions
- lentigo maligna (a type of skin cancer)
- skin cancer
- sunburn, or
- if you work outdoors.

Some brands of tazarotene are not approved for use in children and young adults, for example:

- Arazlo: Do not use in children and young adults younger than 9 years old.
- Avage: Do not use in children and young adults younger than 17
- Fabior: Do not use to treat acne or psoriasis in children younger than 12
- Tazorac: Do not use to treat acne or psoriasis in children younger than 12.

Do not apply tazarotene topical if you are pregnant, may be pregnant, or intend to become pregnant. Tazarotene can cause birth defects and you must have a negative pregnancy test within 2 weeks of starting this treatment. Stop using tazarotene and tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant, if you stop using birth control, or if you miss a menstrual period.

It may not be safe to breastfeed while using tazarotene. Ask your doctor about any risks.

 [Tazarotene topical pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (more detail)

How do I use tazarotene topical?

Most products that contain tazarotene are applied once daily in the evening, avoiding the eyes, mouth, paranasal creases, and mucous membranes, such as the vagina. Use tazarotene at around the same time every day and apply it exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not use more or less of it or use it more often than prescribed. Be sure to tell your doctor how you are responding to your treatment. Women who use tazarotene topical should start the medication during a menstrual period to ensure they are not pregnant.

- Do not apply tazarotene to skin that is sunburned, irritated, scraped, or covered with eczema (a skin disease). If you have any of these conditions, do not apply tazarotene to that area until your skin has healed.
- You may use moisturizers as often as you would like, however, wait until the moisturizer is fully absorbed in the skin (usually 1 hour) before applying tazarotene.
- If you are using tazarotene to treat acne or to reduce facial wrinkling and discoloration, first wash the skin with water and a bar of mild soap and pat dry with a soft towel. If you are using tazarotene to treat psoriasis, it is not necessary to wash the affected skin first, but if you have washed the skin, pat dry before applying tazarotene.
- Do not cover the affected area with any bandages, dressings, or wrappings.
- Wash your hands with soap and water after you finish handling the medication.

Your skin may be more sensitive to weather extremes such as cold and wind during treatment with tazarotene. Protect your skin with clothing and use a moisturizing cream or lotion as needed.

If you are using tazarotene topical to treat acne, your symptoms should improve in about 4 weeks. If you are using tazarotene to treat psoriasis, your symptoms should improve in about 1 to 4 weeks with treatment with tazarotene. If your symptoms do not improve or get worse, call your doctor.

Arazlo lotion

Apply a thin layer of Arazlo lotion to the acne once daily.

Avage cream

Apply a pea-sized amount of Avage cream to lightly cover the entire face once daily at bedtime.

If contact with the eyes occurs, rinse thoroughly with water.

Fabior foam

Shake the foam before use.

- Apply a thin layer of Fabior foam to the entire affected areas of the face and/or upper trunk once daily in the evening.
- Avoid the eyes, lips, and mucous membranes.
- Wash hands after applying.

Fabior foam may catch fire. Stay away from open fire, and flames, and do not smoke while you are applying tazarotene foam, and for a short time afterward.

Tazorac cream or gel

Apply a thin layer of Tazorac gel or cream only to the affected area once daily in the evening.

If contact with the eyes occurs, rinse thoroughly with water.

 [Tazarotene topical patient tips](#) (more detail)

Dosing information

Acne

Cleanse the face gently and dry before application.

Use sunscreen and wear protective clothing while using this drug.

- Apply a thin layer of 0.1% gel/cream/foam once a day in the evening to cover acne lesions.

Psoriasis

Apply to dry skin; if a bath or shower is taken before application, allow time for skin to dry before applying; if emollients are used, they should be applied at least 1 hour prior.

Avoid applying gel or cream on unaffected skin as it may be more susceptible to irritation.

The safety of gel use on more than 20% of body surface area has not been established and is not recommended.

- Initial dose: Apply a thin film of 0.05% gel or cream once a day in the evening to cover only the psoriatic lesions.
- Increase to 0.1% if tolerated and medically indicated.

Fine wrinkles and skin pigmentation disorder

Cleanse the face gently and remove makeup and dry before application. Emollients/moisturizers may be applied before this cream, however, allow them to absorb and completely dry before applying this cream; facial moisturizers may be used as frequently as desired.

Use sunscreen and wear protective clothing while using this drug.

- Apply a pea-sized amount once a day at bedtime to lightly cover the entire face, including the eyelids, if desired.

 [Detailed Tazarotene topical dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Apply the medicine as soon as you can but skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next dose. Do not apply two doses at one time.

What happens if I overdose?

An overdose of tazarotene may cause severe skin discomfort. Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222 if anyone has accidentally swallowed the medicine.

What should I avoid while using tazarotene?

Avoid applying the medication to unaffected areas, unless directed to by your doctor. If the medication accidentally gets on areas that do not need treatment, wash it off.

Avoid using other skin medications on the areas you treat with tazarotene topical unless your doctor tells you to.

Avoid exposure to sunlight or tanning beds. tazarotene can make you sunburn more easily. Wear protective clothing and use sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) when you are outdoors.

Avoid using skin products that can irritate, such as harsh soaps, shampoos, hair coloring or permanent chemicals, hair removers or waxes, or skin products with alcohol, spices, astringents, or lime.

Rinse with water if tazarotene gets in your eyes.

Avoid getting pregnant. Tazarotene can cause birth defects. Stop using tazarotene and tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant, if you stop using birth control, or if you miss a menstrual period.

What are the side effects of tazarotene?

Get emergency medical help if you have signs of an allergic reaction to tazarotene such as hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Stop using tazarotene and call your doctor at once if you have severe skin irritation such as:

- blistering or peeling skin
- severe redness or discomfort or
- swelling, warmth, oozing, or other signs of skin infection.

Common tazarotene topical side effects may include:

- burning
- dryness
- irritation
- itching
- redness
- stinging.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Tazarotene topical side effects](#) (more detail)

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What other drugs will affect tazarotene topical?

Tell your doctor about all your other medicines, especially:

- antibiotics such as doxycycline or other medications can make your skin more sensitive to sunlight.

If you also use a benzoyl peroxide acne medication, do not use it at the same time you use tazarotene topical. Apply one medication only in the morning and the other only in the evening.

When used to treat psoriasis, tazarotene is often prescribed with a corticosteroid to reduce the skin irritation that sometimes develops from using only a retinoid. This medication also increases sun sensitivity. Wearing protective clothing and using sunscreen is recommended. Follow the instructions on the label to minimize the risk of side effects.

This list is not complete. Other drugs may interact with tazarotene, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Not all possible drug interactions are listed here.

 [Tazarotene topical drug interactions](#) (more detail)

Does tazarotene topical interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

tazarotene topical

+

Enter a drug name


Add

Storage

Store at room temperature, away from moisture and heat. Do not freeze.

Fabior foam is flammable. Do not use near high heat or open flame. The canister may explode if it gets too hot. Do not puncture or burn an empty foam canister. Store the bottle in an upright position.

Popular FAQ

- Is tazarotene better than tretinoin? 
- What does tazarotene do to your skin? 
- How long should you use Duobrii? 
- What happens if you use too much Duobrii? 

More FAQ

- [What are the different brands of tazarotene?](#)
- [Can Tazorac and Differin be used together?](#)

[View more FAQ...](#)

References

1. [Tazarotene Product Label](#)
2. [Fabio Product Information](#)
3. [Avage Product Information](#)
4. [Arazlo Product Information](#)

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Patient resources

- [Tazarotene advanced reading](#)
- [Tazarotene Facial Wrinkle Cream](#)

Other brands

[Tazorac](#), [Arazlo](#), [Fabior](#), [Avage](#)

Professional resources

- [Tazarotene \(Topical\) monograph](#)
- [Tazarotene Cream \(FDA\)](#)
- [Tazarotene Foam \(FDA\)](#)
- [Tazarotene Gel \(FDA\)](#)

Other brands

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- [Facial Wrinkles](#)

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Further information

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

[Medical Disclaimer](#)

DRUG STATUS

Availability

Rx Prescription only

Pregnancy & Lactation


 Risk data available

CSA Schedule*

N/A Not a controlled drug



Approval History

 Drug history at FDA



User Reviews & Ratings

7.3 / 10

[74 Reviews](#)

Images

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