

[Home](#)

2. Hydroquinone

Hydroquinone topical

Generic name: hydroquinone topical [*HYE-droe-KWIN-one-TOP-ik-al*]**Brand names:** [EpiQuin Micro](#), [Kaxm](#), [Keido](#), [Kexm](#), [Kutea](#), ... [show all 45 brands](#)**Dosage forms:** topical cream (2%; 4%), topical emulsion (4%; 6%; 8%)**Drug class:** [Topical depigmenting agents](#)[Medically reviewed](#) by Drugs.com on Jul 31, 2023. Written by [Cerner Multum](#).[Uses](#) [Side effects](#) [Warnings](#) [Before taking](#) [Dosage](#) [Interactions](#)

What is hydroquinone topical?

Hydroquinone topical (for the skin) is used to lighten areas of darkened skin such as freckles, age spots, [melasma](#) (sun damage), or chloasma (darkened skin caused by hormonal changes).

Hydroquinone topical may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

Hydroquinone topical side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction**: hives; difficult breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Hydroquinone topical may cause serious side effects. Stop using hydroquinone topical and call your doctor at once if you have:

- severe skin redness, burning, or stinging;
- severe skin dryness, cracking, or bleeding;
- blisters or oozing; or
- blue or black discoloration of the skin (especially if you are Hispanic or African-American).

Common side effects of hydroquinone topical may include:

- mild burning or stinging of treated skin; or
- mild [itching](#), redness, or other irritation.

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.

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

Related/similar drugs

FEATURED

Ozempic

Learn about Ozempic (semaglutide) for type 2 diabetes treatment, weight management, cardiovascular ...

Reviews & ratings

6.6 / 10

[1,504 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Clobetasol topical

Clobetasol is available as a cream, gel, ointment, lotion, solution, foam or spray and is used to ...

Reviews & ratings

8.2 / 10

[164 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Warnings

Follow all directions on your medicine label and package. Tell each of your healthcare providers about all your medical conditions, allergies, and all medicines you use.

Before taking this medicine

You should not use hydroquinone topical if you are allergic to hydroquinone or peroxide.

Ask a doctor or pharmacist if this medicine is safe to use if you have ever had:

- liver or kidney disease;
- [asthma](#) or sulfite [allergy](#); or
- if you are using any [antibiotic](#) medicine.

Ask a doctor before using this medicine if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Do not give this medicine to anyone under 12 years old without medical advice.

How should I use hydroquinone topical?

Use exactly as directed on the label, or as prescribed by your doctor.

Hydroquinone topical is usually applied each morning and at bedtime. **Follow your doctor's dosing instructions very carefully.**

Do not take by mouth. Topical medicine is for use only on the skin.

Before you start using hydroquinone topical, use a "test dose" to see if you have an allergic reaction to this medicine. Apply a very small amount of the medicine to a small area of healthy skin, and check the area within 24 hours. If there is no reaction other than minor redness, begin using the full prescribed amount of the medicine.

Wash your hands before and after applying this medicine, unless you are using it to treat the skin on your hands.

Apply this medicine only to the affected skin areas that need to be lightened. Try not to get any medicine on the skin around these areas.

Do not use hydroquinone topical on open wounds or on sunburned, windburned, dry, chapped, or irritated skin.

Call your doctor if your symptoms do not improve after 2 months, or if your condition gets worse.

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat. Keep the container tightly closed when not in use.

Hydroquinone topical dosing information

Usual Adult Dose for Dermatological Disorders:

Apply to affected areas 2 times a day in the morning and at bedtime or as directed; if no improvement is seen after 2 months of therapy, discontinue use

Comments:

-Rub in well.

Use: For the gradual bleaching of hyperpigmented [skin conditions](#) such as chloasma, melasma, freckles, senile lentigines, and other unwanted areas of melanin hyperpigmentation

Usual Pediatric Dose for Dermatological Disorders:

12 years and older:

Apply to affected areas 2 times a day in the morning and at bedtime or as directed; if no improvement is seen after 2 months of therapy, discontinue use

Comments:

-Rub in well.

Use: For the gradual bleaching of hyperpigmented skin conditions such as chloasma, melasma, freckles, senile lentigines, and other unwanted areas of melanin hyperpigmentation

 [Detailed Hydroquinone 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 hydroquinone topical is not expected to be dangerous. Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222 if anyone has accidentally swallowed the medication.

What should I avoid while using hydroquinone topical?

Avoid getting hydroquinone topical in your eyes.

Avoid getting this medicine on your lips or inside your nose or mouth. Hydroquinone may cause numbness in these areas.

Avoid exposure to sunlight or tanning beds. Hydroquinone topical can make you [sunburn](#) more easily. Wear protective clothing and use [sunscreen](#) (SPF 30 or higher) when you are outdoors. Some hydroquinone products may contain sunscreen. Check the medicine label or ask your doctor to be sure.

Hydroquinone topical may make your skin more sensitive to weather extremes such as cold and wind. Protect your skin with clothing and use a moisturizing lotion as needed.

Using hydroquinone topical together with [benzoyl peroxide](#), [hydrogen peroxide](#), or other peroxide products may stain your skin. This staining can usually be removed with soap and water.

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

What other drugs will affect hydroquinone topical?

Medicine used on the skin is not likely to be affected by other drugs you use. But many drugs can interact with each other. Tell each of your healthcare providers about all medicines you use, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#).

Does hydroquinone topical interact with my other drugs?

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

hydroquinone topical

+

Enter a drug name

Add

More about hydroquinone topical

- [Compare alternatives](#)
- [Pricing & coupons](#)
- [Reviews \(7\)](#)
- [Latest FDA alerts \(1\)](#)
- [Side effects](#)
- [Dosage information](#)
- [During pregnancy](#)
- [Drug class: topical depigmenting agents](#)
- [Breastfeeding](#)
- [En español](#)

Patient resources

- [Hydroquinone patient information](#)
- [Hydroquinone with Sunscreen Cream and Gel](#)

Other brands

[Esoterica Nighttime](#), [Melquin HP](#), [Blanche](#), [Keido](#), ... +18 more

Professional resources

- [Hydroquinone monograph](#)
- [Hydroquinone Cream \(FDA\)](#)
- [Hydroquinone Cream with Sunscreens \(FDA\)](#)
- [Hydroquinone Time Release Cream \(FDA\)](#)

Other brands

[Melquin HP](#), [Lustra](#), [Melamin-C](#), [Glytone Skin Lightening](#), ... +4 more

Related treatment guides

- [Dermatological Disorders](#)


Further information


Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use this medication only for the indication prescribed.

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

[Medical Disclaimer](#)

DRUG STATUS

Availability
 Rx and/or OTC

Pregnancy & Lactation
 Risk data available

CSA Schedule*
N/A Not a controlled drug



User Reviews & Ratings

[7 Reviews](#)

Drugs.com Mobile App

Access drug & treatment information, identify pills, check interactions and set up personal medication records.



About

[About Drugs.com](#)
[Advertising policy](#)
[Attribution & citations](#)

Terms & privacy

[Terms of use](#)
[Editorial policy](#)
[Privacy policy](#)

Support

[Help center](#)
[Sitemap](#)
[Contact us](#)



[Subscribe to our newsletter](#) for the latest medication news, new drug approvals and FDA alerts.

Drugs.com provides accurate and independent information on more than 24,000 prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines and natural products. This material is provided for educational purposes only and is not intended for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Data sources include Micromedex (updated 7 Apr 2025), Cerner Multum™ (updated 13 Apr 2025), ASHP (updated 10 Apr 2025) and others.



Ad Choices
ADVERTISEMENT



Copyright © 2000-2025 Drugs.com. All rights reserved.