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## Diclofenac gel for sun damage (Solaraze)

Use the gel twice daily. Apply a thin layer and gently massage it into the affected area.

Wash your hands after applying the gel (unless you are treating your hands).

### About diclofenac gel for sun damage

Type of medicine	Topical non-steroidal anti-inflammatory gel
Used for	Treating solar (actinic) keratosis (in adults)
Also called	Solaraze®
Available as	Skin gel

Solaraze® gel contains diclofenac, which is a [non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug \(NSAID\)](#). It is used to treat skin damage caused by sun exposure – a condition called [solar keratosis](#). Topical treatments (meaning you apply them to the skin) are useful if you have a lot of small solar keratoses. Solar keratoses (also known as actinic keratoses) are small, thickened, scaly growths which develop on the skin. They usually develop on areas of skin which have received a lot of sun exposure over a period of time.

There are other brands of diclofenac gel manufactured too, but these are used to treat painful muscle and joint conditions – they are not interchangeable with Solaraze®. Please see the separate medicine leaflet called [Diclofenac gel/patch for pain and inflammation](#) for more information about these other products.

## Before using diclofenac gel

To make sure this is the right treatment for you, before you start using diclofenac gel it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- If you have asthma or any other allergic disorder.
- If you have any other skin condition – eczema, for example.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a non-steroidal painkiller (such as aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen, and indometacin) or to any other medicine.

## How to use the gel

- Before you start using diclofenac gel, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about Solaraze® and will provide you with a full list of any side-effects which you may experience.
- Use the gel twice daily for 2-3 months. Apply a thin layer and gently massage it into the affected area. Remember to wash your hands well afterwards (unless you are treating your hands).

## Getting the most from your treatment

- Try to avoid the gel coming into contact with your eyes, and do not apply it to any broken or irritated areas of your skin. If this does happen by accident, wash it off with warm water as soon as possible.
- Some people find using an emollient (moisturiser) on the skin around the damaged areas helps to keep the skin supple and moist. Moisturisers can be applied several times a day if required.
- There is some general advice which will help prevent any further sun damage to your skin. Avoid being out in the sun between 11 am and 3 pm. Always use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, and which protects against both UVB and UVA light. Apply plenty of the sunscreen and re-apply it regularly, particularly after swimming and if you are sweating a lot. Do not use sunbeds.

- Try to keep your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your doctor can check on your progress.
- Check your skin regularly and tell a doctor if you notice any changes, such as new moles, small dark patches developing, or a change in an existing mole. When you have had a lot of sun exposure, your risk of developing other skin problems is increased.

## Can diclofenac gel cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below contains some of the ones associated with diclofenac gel. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your gel. The unwanted effects often improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

Diclofenac gel side-effects	What can I do if I experience this?
Irritation, itching, redness, or tingling at the site of application	If this is severe, stop using diclofenac and ask your doctor or pharmacist for further advice
Using large amounts of gel can very occasionally lead to allergic-type reactions and breathing problems in some people	Stop using diclofenac and contact a doctor for further advice

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the gel, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for further advice.

## How to store diclofenac gel

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.

# Important information about all medicines

Make sure that the person supplying this medicine knows about any other medicines that you are using. This includes medicines you buy and herbal and homeopathic medicines.

If you are having an operation or dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are using.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

This preparation is for use on the skin only. If you suspect that someone has swallowed some of it, go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

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## Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Solaraze® 3% w/w gel](#); Almirall Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated October 2020.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 88th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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