CAPSAICIN

kap-say-sin

What does it do?

Capsaicin cream is used to relieve arthritis or nerve pain, or to relieve itching.

Before you start

- Tell your health professional if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

How should you use it?

Wash your hands, then apply to the affected area as directed. A pea-sized amount is about right for a knee joint, use less for a smaller area.

Wash your hands again after applying the cream. If your hands are the affected area, wait 30 minutes after applying and then wash your hands.

What if you forget a dose?

If it is nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and apply your next dose at the usual time. Otherwise, apply the missed dose as soon as you remember. Do not apply two doses at the same time.

Can you take other medicines?

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Dry, itchy or red skin where cream has been applied	Tell your doctor if troublesome
Tingling or burning feeling where cream has been applied	Common when you first start but should improve.

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:

- It may take a few weeks for *capsaicin* to start fully working.
- Heat can increase the burning feeling of the cream. Just before and just after applying the cream, do not have hot showers or baths, or put hot water bottles or heat pads on the area where you have applied it.
- The smell of the cream can make you cough or sneeze so try to not sniff or breathe it in when applying it.
- Take care not to get any *capsaicin* in your eyes or on damaged or inflamed skin. If this happens, rinse the area well with water straight away.