ACITRETIN
a-see-tret-tin

What does it do?
Acitretin is used to treat psoriasis, and sometimes other skin conditions.

How should you take it?
Take acitretin regularly as directed with food and a glass of water.

What if you forget a dose?
If it is nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take your next dose at the usual time. Otherwise, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Do not take two doses at the same time.

Can you take other medicines?
Some medicines available without a prescription may react with acitretin including:
- products containing vitamin A (including multivitamins)

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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Side Effects</th>
<th>Recommended action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low mood, unusual behaviour or thinking Headache, changes in vision, pounding in one or both ears (may be intracranial hypertension)</td>
<td>Tell your doctor immediately</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dry or irritated skin, lips, eyes, mouth or nose (including nose bleeds)</td>
<td>Use moisturiser, lip balm and eye drops. Tell your health professional if troublesome.</td>
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<td>Trouble seeing at night</td>
<td>Take care when driving at night. Tell your doctor if troublesome.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joint, muscle or bone aches and pains More sensitive to sunlight (sunburn or rash) Hair loss or thinning</td>
<td>Tell your doctor if troublesome</td>
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If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:
- Acitretin must not be used if you are pregnant, or planning to become pregnant, because of a high risk of abnormalities in the developing baby. It is very important to use reliable contraception while taking acitretin and for 3 years after stopping. Talk with your doctor about your contraceptive options.
- Tell your doctor if you are breastfeeding, or if you have high cholesterol or depression.
- Sometimes psoriasis can get worse when you first start acitretin. Tell your doctor if this is troublesome.
- Acitretin can make your skin sensitive, so avoid treatments such as waxing, laser or dermabrasion while taking acitretin and for 3 to 6 months after stopping.
- Protect yourself from too much sunlight while being treated with acitretin. Always cover up and apply a thick layer of broad spectrum sunscreen (at least SPF 30) when outside. Do not use sunbeds.
- You will need regular blood tests while taking acitretin to check if it is causing problems with your liver or cholesterol levels.
- Do not donate blood while taking acitretin, and for 3 years after stopping.

This leaflet contains important, but not all, information about this medicine.
Prepared by the PILs Committee at Christchurch Hospital, Canterbury District Health Board, New Zealand. October 2021