

Short contact Dithranol Treatment : Do's and Do'nts

This is one of the few effective topical treatments for Psoriasis and has been in use for over 50 years. Dithranol tends to stain carpets & curtain more or less permanently so caution needs to be exercised, the bath or shower is washable with usual bathroom detergents. This treatment is for the body and limbs only and **cannot be used on sensitive parts** of the body as the face, flexures, genitals and breasts.

On the thick areas of psoriasis start with 0.1% Dithrocream which should be applied **exactly** to the psoriasis plaque and talcum powder sprinkled to keep the cream in place. Wearing old clothes at such times is better. Dithrocream should never be applied like a moisturiser as there is the risk of a Dithranol burn characterised by soreness of the treated area. This usually happens by imprudent application or where the strength is increased: one just halts the treatment for a few days, use a moisturiser and then restart at the lower strength and build up again.

Every 2 weeks the Dithrocream maybe increased to 0.25, 0.5, and 1% strengths. The treated skin will be stained brown but when one reaches a stage where the psoriasis is almost flush with the surface of the surrounding skin treatment with Dithrocream maybe stopped and substituted with a simple moisturiser as Epaderm or QV intensive ointment. Though a bit messy usually this treatment gives a respite of 2-3 months and maybe used again. It does not cause the rebound flare up as happens when one uses steroids and stops it. Used with care and caution it is a safe effective treatment.

If combined with light treatment Dithrocream should be applied **AFTER** the light treatment.

Please refer to the Dithrocream leaflet or to the website www.dermal.co.uk