

# Betamethasone Valerate

## Why is this medication prescribed?

This medication is used to treat a variety of skin conditions (e.g. eczema, dermatitis, allergies, rash). Betamethasone reduces the swelling, itching, and redness that can occur in these types of conditions. This medication is a medium-strength corticosteroid.

## How should this medicine be used?

Use this medication on the skin only. However, do not use it on the face, groin, or underarms unless directed to do so by your doctor.

Wash and dry your hands before using. Clean and dry the affected area. Apply a thin film of medication to the affected area and gently rub in, usually 1-3 times daily or as directed by your doctor. Do not bandage, cover, or wrap the area unless directed to do so by your doctor. If used in the diaper area on an infant, do not use tight-fitting diapers or plastic pants.

After applying the medication, wash your hands unless you are using this medication to treat the hands. When applying this medication near the eyes, avoid getting it in the eyes because this may worsen or cause glaucoma. Also, avoid getting this medication in the nose or mouth. If you get the medication in these areas, rinse with plenty of water.

Use this medication only for the condition for which it was prescribed. Do not use it for longer than prescribed.

Inform your doctor if your condition persists or worsens after 2 weeks.

## What special precautions should I follow?

Before using betamethasone, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or to other corticosteroids (e.g., hydrocortisone, prednisone); or if you have any other allergies.

Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, especially of: poor blood circulation, diabetes, immune system problems.

Do not use if there is an infection or sore in the area to be treated.

Though very unlikely, it is possible this medication will be absorbed into your bloodstream. This may have undesirable consequences that may require additional corticosteroid treatment. This is especially true for children and those who have used this drug for an extended time, especially if they also have serious medical problems such as serious infections, injuries, or surgeries. This precaution applies for up to one year after stopping use of this drug. Tell your doctor immediately if any of the following side effects occur: vision problems, persistent headache, increased thirst/urination, unusual weakness, unusual weight loss, dizziness.

Children may be more sensitive to the effects of too much steroid hormone. Though it is unlikely to occur with corticosteroids applied to the skin, this medication may affect growth in infants and children if used for long periods. Monitor your child's height and rate of growth from time to time. During pregnancy, this medication should be used only when clearly needed.

It is not known whether this drug passes into breast milk when applied to the skin.

**What should I do if I forget a dose?**

If you miss a dose, use it as soon as you remember. If it is near the time of the next dose, skip the missed dose and resume your usual dosing schedule. Do not double the dose to catch up.

**What side effects can this medication cause?**

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

Stop using this medication and call your doctor at once if you have any of these signs that you may be absorbing betamethasone topical through your skin or gums

- blurred vision, or seeing halos around lights;
- uneven heartbeats;
- mood changes;
- sleep problems (insomnia);
- weight gain, puffiness in your face; or
- feeling tired.

Less serious side effects may include:

- skin redness, burning, itching, or peeling;
- thinning of your skin; or
- blistering skin; or
- stretch marks.



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**What storage conditions are needed for this medicine?**

Store at room temperature between 15-30 degrees C away from light and moisture.

In case of emergency/overdose

This medication may be harmful if swallowed. If swallowing or overdose is suspected, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

**What other information should I know?**

Do not cover treated skin areas with a bandage or other covering unless your doctor has told you to. If you are treating the diaper area of a baby, do not use plastic pants or tight-fitting diapers. Covering the skin that is treated with betamethasone topical can increase the amount of the drug your skin absorbs, which may lead to unwanted side effects. Follow your doctor's instructions.

Avoid using this medication on your face, near your eyes, or on body areas where you have skin folds or thin skin.

Do not use this medication on a child without a doctor's advice. Children are more sensitive to the effects of betamethasone topical.

Betamethasone topical will not treat a bacterial, fungal, or viral skin infection.