Tacrolimus ointment 0.1%
(Protopic ointment 0.1%)

Information for Vulval Clinic patients

What is Tacrolimus?

Tacrolimus is an immunosuppressive medication. This means that it works to suppress the immune system cells in the skin and reduce inflammation.

Why do I need it?

Tacrolimus ointment can be an effective treatment for moderate to severe inflammatory skin conditions such as lichen sclerosus, lichen planus, and eczema.

Tacrolimus is usually offered to patients who have a poor response to first-line treatments such as emollient creams and steroid ointments. Studies have shown that patients treated with Tacrolimus ointment usually notice an improvement in their symptoms after about one week of starting the treatment and maximum improvement at about three months.

How do I use it?

Tacrolimus ointment is a prescription medicine and should only be used as directed by your doctor. Initial treatment will be for a short period to assess your response. If it is effective it may be continued for six to twelve months if needed. Sometimes it is possible to reduce the treatment to two to three times a week, or reduce the strength of the ointment once the skin condition is under control.

A thin layer of ointment should be rubbed in gently to the affected area twice a day. A 'finger-tip unit' is usually enough.

Continued overleaf

Are there any side effects?

Most patients tolerate Tacrolimus ointment well. Common side effects include burning, itching, redness and a warm sensation to the area. These symptoms usually disappear within one week of using the ointment.

Tacrolimus ointment has not been shown to cause skin thinning, however there are concerns that the use of Tacrolimus might increase the risk of skin cancer. It is very important to continue with regular self examination and to keep your follow up appointments at the vulval clinic, so your progress can be carefully monitored.

Contact us

Colposcopy and Vulval Clinic

Open 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday

01872 2522360

Eden ward (Gynaecology ward)

Open 24 hours

01872 252090 or 253163

Dermatology Specialist Nurses

Secretary - 01872 252308

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690

RCHT 1673
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Revised 10/2023 V2 **Review due 10/2026**