

ABOUT OVER-THE-COUNTER (OTC) TOPICALS

There are medications available for purchase at local pharmacies and stores without a prescription, also called over-the-counter (OTC) medications. There are oral and topical OTC medications that can help relieve painful conditions. Ask your local pharmacist if the cost of some of these medications is covered by your insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid plan.

OTC topical pain relievers are available as creams, gels, lotions, sprays, and patches. These are applied to the skin to help decrease pain from sore muscles and arthritis by producing a numbing sensation, decreasing inflammation in joints, or blocking pain receptors in the brain by creating a warming and/or cooling sensation. The products include a variety of medications such as lidocaine, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDs), and counterirritants such as capsaicin, menthol and camphor.

Keep in mind:

- Always tell your healthcare provider about all medications you are taking, including OTC options, herbals and supplements.
- Read and follow all directions and warnings on OTC packaging.
- Review all active ingredients in the OTC product. Many OTC products have multiple active ingredients.
- It is important to use these medications only as directed. Stop using the OTC product if any side effects occur and seek medical attention.
- Keep out of reach of children and pets.



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OVER-THE-COUNTER TOPICAL PAIN MEDICATIONS

A guide to understanding topical (patches, creams) pain medications



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LIDOCAINE 4% PATCHES (SALONPAS®)

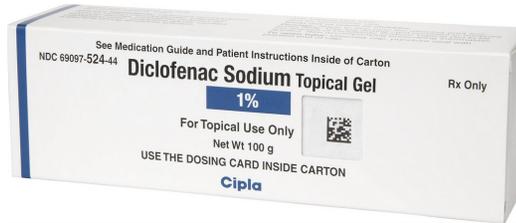
DICLOFENAC 1% GEL (VOLTAREN®) KNOWN AS AN NSAID

COUNTERIRRITANTS (ICYHOT®, BIOFREEZE®, TIGER BALM®, ETC.)

COMMON USES

- Local anesthetic which works as a numbing agent and when placed on the skin, will work at the site of pain.
- Aids in reducing pain associated with nerve pain from shingles and back or muscle-related pain.

Pain associated with osteoarthritis in hand, wrist, elbow, foot, ankle, and knee.



Produces a pain relieving effect by stimulating the nerves with a warming and/or cooling sensation to reduce pain associated with aches and sprains of muscles and joints, back pain and arthritis pain.

DOSING

Place 1 patch onto the painful area. Remove patch from the skin 8 hours after application. May use 1 patch 3-4 times daily.



Use the provided dosing card and dose based on area of painful condition for a maximum of 21 days:

- Hands, wrists, or elbows: Rub 2 grams (2.25 inches) into skin four times daily
- Feet, ankles, knees: Rub 4 grams (4.5 inches) into skin four times daily

Note: It can take up to 7 days to experience relief after starting this gel.

Apply to painful area no more than 3-4 times per day as needed for up to 7 days.



WARNINGS

Only use on intact skin and only as directed. Do not leave patch on for longer than 8 hours or as directed. Do not use a heating pad with the patch.

- Do not use on open wounds or with heating pads.
- Diclofenac gel may increase the risk of heart and blood vessel problems.
- Do not use if you have a history of asthma or allergic-type reactions with aspirin or other nonsteroidal (NSAID) medications, such as ibuprofen and naprosyn.
- Using this product with oral NSAIDS could increase the risk of adverse effects.

Use products only as directed. Skin irritation or rash could occur. Note that some products may contain lidocaine.