

NEW BEAUTY®

ADULT ACNE

Altreno Lotion: The Ultimate Treatment for Adult Acne?

An Rx solution that gets ALL the rave reviews.

By Liz Ritter, Executive Editor · Published: Jan 11, 2024



Miami Beach, FL dermatologist Melissa Lazarus, MD and her teenage son are very in sync on one specific skin care step of late: The regular use of Altreno (tretinoin) Lotion, 0.05%, which the doctor calls her “favorite product currently.”

“I use it on myself. It’s very tolerable and effective,” she says of the treatment. “It is keeping my acne-prone skin super clear and I don’t have a lot of the dryness I find with other versions of tretinoin. My son uses Altreno as well.”

The Doctor Is In(to) It

New York dermatologist **Jody A. Levine, MD** also has some solid experience with Altreno: “My patients who use Altreno are very happy with it and enjoy the lotion base. I do prefer to prescribe the retinoids that I compound in my office, as they are even better for sensitive skin, but I do think that among the prescription retinoids, Altreno is an excellent one.”

Bethpage, NY dermatologist Dr. Winifred Chu shares similar praise for the prescription-only product, and also uses it personally: “I have eczema and very sensitive skin and I can still tolerate and use Altreno every night. The hydrating ingredients in this lotion help to minimize the dryness and irritation, which are the common side effects with the use of tretinoin.”

The History Behind Altreno

According to Altreno's manufacturer—they're also the masterminds behind Retin-A—the Rx is the "first and only tretinoin lotion, designed with women in mind, providing efficacy and tolerability with a once-daily dosing." Translation: It's good for adult acne, which, according to the latest American Academy of Dermatologist stats, affects up to 15 percent of women. Plus, Altreno backs that age claim via hydrating ingredients like sodium hyaluronate, glycerin and collagen, which Fort Lauderdale, FL dermatologist Dr. Matthew J. Elias points out lessens the possibility of potential adverse effects such as dryness and irritation.

Alternative Treatment

While Covington, LA dermatologist Christel Malinski, MD calls Altreno lotion "nice and fancy," she says the one drawback of having that positive reputation is a price tag to match.

"I don't prescribe Altreno often because of the cost to the patient. It's not covered by insurance—meaning it's more than \$100 for one prescription, whereas generic tretinoin 0.025 percent is easily covered by insurance often for 10 percent of that cost," she says. "If you are strictly using it for anti-aging, then the cost is easier to stomach as nothing is covered by insurance for wrinkles. But it does have a nice vehicle and is a low-potency tretinoin."

New York dermatologist Peter Chien, MD also prefers to prescribe other treatment options, mainly due to the cost. "I prescribe a stronger, but generic tretinoin 0.1 percent, and tell patients to mix a pea sized amount of it with an equal amount of Cerave PM moisturizing lotion. You end up getting the same 0.05-percent concentration with a moisturizer."

The Altreno Advantage

Even with the cost in mind, New Orleans dermatologist Mary Lupo, MD says Altreno is still "totally worth it" and looks at it this way: For the face, a tube last for months, so it's a great value.

"The data shows improved tolerability compared to Retin-A Micro and Atralin. The glycerin and the hydrolysis collagen improves hydration and the mesh-like delivery system allows for gradual release. Patients over 25 love it. I use it as well. It is the best new retinoid out there for sure."

Bonus Tip

Austin dermatologist David Bushore, MD says that the hardest part about prescription topical retinoids is being able to tolerate the stronger formulations—but he's found a product that mixes perfectly with Altreno that doesn't make his rosacea flare-up or irritation soar. "It has ingredients that have made it much easier for almost everyone to tolerate a medium strength prescription retinoid. Due to my rosacea, every topical retinoid has caused me irritation. Now I can use a medium strength prescription retinoid... as long as I also apply Epionce Renewal Facial Lotion (\$94) immediately after. This Epionce lotion contains many anti-inflammatory ingredients that help with tolerability of topical retinoids. This combination of Altreno lotion and Epionce Renewal Facial Lotion works very well together."
