

## KAROL A. GUTOWSKI, MD, FACS

*AESTHETIC SURGERY*

*CERTIFIED BY THE AMERICAN BOARD OF PLASTIC SURGERY*

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### Instructions for Tretinoin (Retin-A, Renova) Use

Tretinoin, also known as Retin-A and Renova, is a prescription skin medication used to treat many disorders including sun-damaged skin. Many of the signs of skin aging, such as fine wrinkles, are a result of sun exposure. Tretinoin improves the structure of your skin and increases the amount of collagen, an important skin structure that diminishes with aging. Tretinoin may be used alone, in combination with other skin medications, or in preparation for other treatments such as chemical peels, dermabrasion or laser procedures. You may not see significant improvement until 2 to 3 months after starting use. Remember that the sun causes permanent skin damage and ages your skin. So minimize your time out in the sun, wear a wide brimmed hat to protect your face and apply sunscreen every day.

Please follow these instructions carefully. Tretinoin is best applied at night and most people prefer to do so before going to sleep.

1. Wash your face thoroughly and remove any makeup, allow the skin to dry for about 15 minutes.
2. Apply a pea-sized amount of Tretinoin to your face except for the corners of your mouth, corners of your nose and the portions of your eyelids closest to your eyes. After a few weeks you may use a bit more.
3. Do NOT rub the product in, apply a thin layer and allow it to dry. End the application with a “feathering” motion at the edge of the application area.
4. Apply on Mondays and Thursdays to start. After 2 weeks, apply every other night, after another 2 weeks, apply every night as tolerated.
5. After your skin is used to the Tretinoin, you may apply a bit more to areas with more wrinkles.
6. After your desired concentration is achieved, you may taper the Tretinoin: Apply only 3 times per week for 2 weeks, then 2 times per week for 2 weeks, then stop.
7. You may restart the cycle of use after 6 months.
8. Use with caution on your neck. Start with a smaller portion than for your face and apply only once per a week. If your skin tolerates it, after 2 weeks you may increase to 2 times per a week and later to 3 times per a week.
9. If the side effects continue, please call Dr. Gutowski and ask for a lower strength of Tretinoin. Most people use 0.1% Tretinoin but a 0.05% preparation is available. Dr. Gutowski will determine which strength to use for you.
10. Since sun exposure damages your skin, it is important to apply a sunscreen every morning and more frequently if needed.

Although it is considered a very safe treatment, please be aware of the following side effects.

1. Skin irritation, peeling, flaking and redness are common and usually resolve within 2 to 4 weeks. If you have rosacea or naturally pink skin, the redness may be more significant.
2. Do not use any preparations with hydroxyacids, vitamin C or other irritating products unless you have been using them already without irritation.
3. Although skin application has not been shown to cause problems during pregnancy, it is recommended to stop use if you may be pregnant.