

Minoxidil (Rogaine)

Minoxidil was developed to treat hair loss in men and women. It is supplied as a topical solution (usually dosed as 1 milliliter (mL) to the scalp two times a day) or a topical foam (usually dosed as half a capful to the scalp two times a day) .

How To Use It

This medicine usually comes with patient instructions. It is important that you read the instructions carefully.

It is very important that you use this medicine only as directed. Do not use more of it and do not use it more often than your doctor ordered. To do so may increase the chance of it being absorbed through the skin. For the same reason, do not apply minoxidil to other parts of your body. Absorption into the body may affect the heart and blood vessels and cause unwanted effects.

Do not use any other skin products on the same skin area on which you use minoxidil. Hair coloring, hair permanents, and hair relaxers may be used during minoxidil therapy as long as the scalp is washed just before applying the hair coloring, permanent, or relaxer. Minoxidil should not be used 24 hours before and after the hair treatment procedure. Be sure to not double your doses of minoxidil to make up for any missed doses.

If you miss a dose... ask yourself if you are closer to the dose you missed – if so, take the missed dose and continue on your regular schedule. If you are closer to the next scheduled dose, wait and take that one. Do not double-up on doses.

To apply minoxidil topical solution:

Make sure your hair and scalp are completely dry before applying this medicine.

Apply the amount prescribed to the area of the scalp being treated, beginning in the center of the area. Follow your doctor's instructions on how to apply the solution, using the applicator provided.

Do not shampoo your hair for 4 hours after applying minoxidil.

Immediately after using this medicine, wash your hands to remove any medicine that may be on them.

Do not use a hairdryer to dry the scalp after you apply minoxidil solution. Blowing with a hairdryer on the scalp may make the treatment less effective.

Allow the minoxidil to completely dry for 2 to 4 hours after applying it, including before going to bed. Minoxidil can stain clothing, hats, or bed linen if your hair or scalp is not fully dry after using the medicine.

Avoid transferring the medicine while wet to other parts of the body. This can occur if the medicine gets on your pillowcase or bed linens or if your hands are not washed after applying minoxidil.

To apply minoxidil topical foam:

Open the container by matching the arrow on can ring with the arrow on cap. Pull off the cap.

Part the hair into one or more rows to expose the hair thinning area on the scalp.

Hold the can upside down and press the nozzle to put foam on your fingers.

Use your fingers to spread the foam over the hair loss area and gently massage into your scalp.

Immediately after using this medicine, wash your hands to remove any medicine that may be on them .

If your scalp becomes abraded, irritated, or sunburned, check with your doctor before applying minoxidil.

Minoxidil topical foam or solution is for use on the scalp only. Keep this medicine away from the eyes, nose, and mouth. If you should accidentally get some in your eyes, nose, or mouth, flush the area thoroughly with cool tap water. If you are using the pump spray, be careful not to breathe in the spray .

Do not use the foam near heat or open flame, or while smoking. Do not puncture, break, or burn the aerosol can.

Side Effects

Minoxidil is generally well-tolerated; it may cause itching or redness at the site of application.

Warnings

Minoxidil is flammable; keep away from fire.

–Updated 7/28/2012 by Chris Aiken, MD