

Spironolactone

Originally developed as a diuretic medication for high blood pressure, spironolactone is commonly used to treat hormonal acne in women. It works by blocking excessive male hormones at skin receptors, though does not change hormonal levels. Taken daily, spironolactone can successfully control acne over several months and is safe to remain on for years if needed.

Cautions:

- Pregnancy – Measures **MUST** be taken to prevent pregnancy throughout the duration of spironolactone treatment. Appropriate and effective birth control is needed as the medication could have an adverse hormonal effect on a developing fetus
- Blood pressure – Your blood pressure may temporarily be lowered as medication is initiated. Therefore, starting at a lower dose of medicine for the first 2-4 weeks before graduating to a full dose may be helpful in preventing excessive dizziness, lightheadedness, and fatigue. With continued use, your body should acclimate to the change
- Potassium – Avoid food or supplements with high potassium content to prevent elevated blood potassium levels, especially if over age 45. Examples of what to avoid include lots of bananas, coconut water/milk, low sodium processed foods ie soup
- Hormonal – You may experience irregular menses or mid-cycle spotting, breast tenderness or fullness hormonal symptoms for the first couple of months, but they generally improve without changes in medication.

The starting dose of spironolactone typically is 100mg once daily. The time of day doesn't matter but try to be consistent. Consider starting with ½ a tablet (50mg) daily for the first 2-4 weeks to adjust to the blood pressure impact.