Camphor cream - Use | Side Effects

Camphor is a drug that works by causing blood vessels to expand or dilate on the part of the skin where it is applied. Dilatation of blood vessels leads to an increase in blood flow and local skin temperature which causes a short-lasting burning sensation followed by a pleasant cooling sensation. This leads to the blockage of transmission of nerve impulses and that further leads to the pain relief. Camphor also relieves itching sensation and can be used in the treatment of fungal infections (especially those in your toenails).

Products containing Camphor are not intended for oral use and should not be used to treat cough or flatulence.

Precautions

Camphor exist in the form of creams, gels and ointments and when applied locally (on the skin) it causes only mild side effects, such as skin redness or irritation.

Do not use camphor preparations orally because in this case the risk of toxic effects is much higher. There have been reports of deaths after oral administration of this drug.

Camphor should never be applied in the following situations:

- If you have sensitive skin (especially if you have eczema-prone skin)
- If you have an open wound or damaged skin
- If you have an acute or chronic inflammation of the skin
- If you have an open venous ulcers
In children under the age of 12 years. One case of Camphor cream use in baby aged 4 months has been reported. Baby's nanny rubbed a small amount of Camphor cream on the abdomen to alleviate flatulence. After a week, the baby began to vomit and have a seizures! As the researchers note, children don't have the enzymes necessary for the metabolism of camphor when it is absorbed through the skin, which leads to the accumulation of toxic substances in an organism.\textsuperscript{1}

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Camphor, pregnancy and breastfeeding

Case of intentional oral Camphor ingestion from a 16-year-old girl to trigger abortion has been reported.\textsuperscript{2} Camphor crosses the placenta, and as we have already mentioned, children (including the fetus) don't have the enzymes necessary for the metabolism of camphor, which causes toxic effects. Camphor is highly toxic when it is administered orally during pregnancy. Also, the topical preparations of this drug should not be used during pregnancy because there is a risk of absorption through the skin.

It should not be applied during breastfeeding, due to the risk of absorption and possible excretion into breast milk.

Dosage

Camphor should be applied only locally! Don't take camphor preparations orally! Avoid application of topical preparations on mucous membranes, eyes or nose.

Don't use a bandage or warm compresses on the site of application. If your skin is warmed (e.g. after physical activity), do not apply this medicine until the skin is cooled. Avoid exposure to the sunlight while applying this medicine, because of the increased risk of photosensitivity.

After applying this medicine, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.

Apply a thin layer of the cream, ointment or gel on the affected area and gently rub it into the skin. This drug can be administered 3-4 times a day. Do not apply the medicine to the areas that are larger than the area of two hands.

If you see no improvements after a week of application, then you should contact your doctor.

Interactions

Camphor should not be administered concurrently with the following drugs:

- Drugs used to treat high blood pressure
- Drugs used to treat depression

Side effects

If used in a proper way, this medicine rarely causes side effects. If applied to larger areas of the skin than recommended, this medicine can cause the following side effects:

- Nausea
• Vomiting
• Ringing in the ears

The most commonly reported side effects are redness and irritation at the application site.

References

1. NCBI link 1
2. NCBI link 2