

Topical Estradiol for the Skin

compounded dermatology

Topical estradiol is a compounded preparation your dermatologist or hormone prescriber may use to address skin thinning, dryness, and loss of elasticity in mature or postmenopausal skin. This guide covers how it works, how to apply and measure it, and the safety points that matter with any hormone applied to skin. Always follow your prescription label first.

Why estrogen matters to skin

Skin is a hormone-responsive organ. Estrogen receptors sit in the epidermis, the dermis, hair follicles, and sweat glands, and when circulating estrogen falls at menopause the skin changes measurably. Research in postmenopausal women has estimated that roughly 30% of dermal collagen is lost in the first five years after menopause, with a slower decline of about 2% per year afterward.

- **Collagen and thickness** — estrogen influences how much type I and III collagen the dermis maintains.
- **Hydration** — it supports hyaluronic acid content and the skin's barrier lipids.
- **Elasticity** — elastic fiber quality and skin extensibility are estrogen-sensitive.

How it is prescribed and applied

Strengths used for the skin are low — commonly in the range of 0.01% to 0.1%, and your prescriber chooses the exact one. Apply only the amount your label specifies, to the areas your label names, usually the face, neck, or backs of the hands, and usually at night.

- Apply to clean, dry skin. Spread thinly and evenly — more product does not mean more benefit, it means more absorption.
- If your prescription comes in a Topi-Click or with a calibrated applicator, measure with it every time. Estimating by eye is the most common dosing error we see.
- **Wash your hands** immediately after applying, unless your hands are one of the treated areas.
- Let the area dry fully before dressing or going to bed.

Avoid transfer. This is a hormone. Until the treated skin is dry, keep it from touching another person's skin — particularly children, pregnant partners, and pets. Store the container out of reach of children.

Absorption — the honest part

Some systemic absorption is possible with any topical hormone. How much depends on the strength, the amount applied, the size of the area, and the condition of the skin. Small quantities on the face and neck are expected to produce little systemic exposure, but "little" is not "none," and that is why this is a prescription therapy with follow-up rather than a cosmetic.

Tell your prescriber before starting if you have or have had a hormone-sensitive cancer (including breast or uterine), blood clots or a clotting disorder, liver disease, or unexplained vaginal bleeding — or if you are pregnant, trying to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

Call your prescriber if you notice breast tenderness, new vaginal bleeding or spotting, unusual headaches, or leg swelling or pain while using this preparation.

What to expect

Changes in hydration are usually the first thing patients notice, often within a few weeks. Thickness, firmness, and fine lines are slower — give it three to six months before judging the result.

- **Sunscreen still does the heavy lifting.** Photoprotection protects any gain you make.
- Mild redness or irritation at first is possible; persistent irritation is not expected — let us know.
- Your prescriber may want to reassess after a few months and periodically thereafter. Topical hormone therapy is not a set-and-forget product.

Working with us

This is a compounded preparation, made for you under your prescription, and it is not FDA-approved for dermatologic use; the published evidence comes from relatively small studies. We prepare it in the exact strength and base your prescriber specifies, including preservative-free and fragrance-free bases. If you are also on systemic hormone therapy, tell us — we will make sure your prescribers have the full picture.

This guide is general educational information prepared by our pharmacists. It is not medical advice, is not a recommendation to start any therapy, and does not replace the guidance of your physician or pharmacist. Compounded preparations are made for an individual patient under a valid prescription and are not FDA-approved or FDA-evaluated for safety or effectiveness. Always follow your prescription label and your prescriber's directions, which take priority over anything written here. **Always consult with your doctor or pharmacist** before starting, stopping, or changing any therapy. For a medical emergency, call 911. By using this information you accept that Village Pharmacy & Compounding, its owners, and staff are not liable for any injury, loss, or damage arising from its use.

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