

# Understanding And Treating A Chronic Skin Condition, Beyond The Exam Room



(NAPSA)—Most everyone has experienced temporary skin changes such as redness or peeling from too much fun in the sun. But for some people, too many years of intense or unprotected sun exposure can cause a more long-term—and potentially serious—skin condition called actinic keratosis, or AK.<sup>1</sup>

People with actinic keratosis (also known as solar keratosis) experience patches of dry, scaly skin on areas of the body most frequently exposed to the sun, such as the face, lips, neck, back and feet. Sometimes, the patches, or lesions, may clear on their own.<sup>2,3</sup> However, if left untreated, there is a small chance that the lesions may develop into a type of skin cancer called squamous cell carcinoma (SCC).<sup>4</sup> Approximately one in 10 AK lesions may advance to SCC.<sup>3</sup>

It is estimated that more than 10 million Americans have AK.<sup>3</sup> The good news for patients is that physicians agree that with proper diagnosis, treatment and a healthy dose of skin care at the earliest and most treatable stages, AK can be successfully managed. In fact, with early treatment, the cure rate often exceeds 90 percent.<sup>5</sup>

## New Educational Resource

A web-based resource program is now available to help further educate patients about AK. The program, called AK Connect ([www.solaraze.com/akconnect](http://www.solaraze.com/akconnect)), contains information about the importance of being aware of changes to the skin, staying on treatment if diagnosed with AK, and protecting the skin from further sun damage.

AK Connect is sponsored by PharmaDerm, a division of

Nycomed US Inc. and the makers of SOLARAZE® (diclofenac sodium-3%) Gel, an FDA-approved topical treatment for AK.

## Personalized Information

The AK Connect website offers personalized information based on where a patient is in treatment. This includes patients who haven't been diagnosed but want to learn more about AK; patients who are looking for information about all AK treatment options; and patients currently taking SOLARAZE (diclofenac sodium) Gel who may have questions about what to expect while on treatment.

## A new online program offers information customized to meet the specific needs of those with actinic keratosis, or AK.

The site allows users to have their own personal page, select relevant topics that they want to read about, and find customized resources for support. All the information on the site stresses the importance of regular self-examinations, early diagnosis and ongoing communication between patients and their doctors to help decide on the best course of treatment.

## A More Productive Dialogue

“AK Connect is designed to provide information to help patients understand more about the symptoms, diagnosis and available treatment options for AK,” said Steve Andrzejewski, CEO of Nycomed US. “We believe patients should play an active role in their care, and the more information they have, the better equipped they are to actively participate in the decision-making process with their physician.”

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*Solaraze® (diclofenac sodium) Gel is indicated for the topical treatment of actinic keratosis (AK). Sun avoidance is indicated during therapy.*

## Important Product Safety Information About SOLARAZE® Gel

*Do not use Solaraze (diclofenac sodium) Gel if you have hypersensitivity to diclofenac, benzyl alcohol, polyethylene glycol or sodium hyaluronate.*

*As with other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)—e.g., aspirin—severe, rapidly progressing allergic reactions may occur in patients without prior exposure to diclofenac.*

*The most common side effects of Solaraze Gel involve mild to moderately severe skin reactions, such as dermatitis, rash, dry skin and scaling of the skin. Avoid using Solaraze Gel in patients with active ulcer affecting stomach or intestines and severe disorders of kidney or liver.*

*Avoid sun exposure and concurrent use of sunscreens, cosmetics or other topical medications during Solaraze Gel therapy. Do not apply Solaraze Gel to broken skin, infections or inflamed red skin with scaling. Avoid contact with the eyes.*

*Inform your doctor if you are taking other NSAIDs or if pregnant or nursing a baby.*

*For more information, consult your health care provider.*

*For more information about Solaraze (diclofenac sodium) Gel, please refer to the full Prescribing Information at <https://www.solaraze.com>.*

<sup>1</sup>ActinicKeratosisNet. Could that be AK on your skin: American Academy of Dermatology website. [http://www.skincarephysicians.com/actinickeratosisnet/AK\\_skin.html](http://www.skincarephysicians.com/actinickeratosisnet/AK_skin.html). Accessed May 20, 2011.

<sup>2</sup>Actinic Keratosis. Symptoms: The Mayo Clinic website: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/actinic-keratosis/DS00568/DSECTION=symptoms>. Accessed May 20, 2011.

<sup>3</sup>Actinic Keratosis: The Most Common Precancer: The Skin Cancer Foundation website. <http://www.skincancer.org/actinic-keratosis-and-other-precancers.html>. Accessed May 20, 2011.

<sup>4</sup>Actinic Keratosis. Complications: The Mayo Clinic website: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/actinic-keratosis/DS00568/DSECTION=complications>. Accessed May 20, 2011.

<sup>5</sup>ActinicKeratosisNet. Early diagnosis and treatment for AKs can make a difference. American Academy of Dermatology website. [http://www.skincarephysicians.com/actinickeratosisnet/early\\_diagnosis.html](http://www.skincarephysicians.com/actinickeratosisnet/early_diagnosis.html). Accessed May 20, 2011.