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## Consumer Medicine Information

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### What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about Zostrix HP.

It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

**If you have any concerns about using this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.**

Keep this leaflet in case you need to read it again.

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### What Zostrix HP is used for

This medicine is for the treatment of medically diagnosed painful diabetic neuropathy (pain caused by nerve damage in people with diabetes). It is also used for the treatment of pain associated with post-herpetic neuralgia (the pain that comes after shingles).

This medicine contains purified capsaicin, a natural extract from chilli peppers.

This medicine is believed to act on a substance in the body which is involved in the transmission of pain impulses from nerve endings near the skin and joints to the brain.

It is believed that regular application of Zostrix HP to the affected site will in time reduce the amount of this substance in nearby nerve endings.

With less of this substance present, Zostrix HP may help the pain to be less intense and in some cases block the pain completely.

There is not enough information to recommend the use of this medicine for children under the age of 2 years.

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### Before you use Zostrix HP

#### *When you must not use it*

**Do not use Zostrix HP if you have an allergy to:**

- any medicine containing capsaicin
- any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet

Some of the symptoms of an allergic reaction may include shortness of breath, wheezing or difficulty breathing; swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body; rash, itching or hives on the skin.

**Do not use this medicine on active shingles**

**Do not use this medicine after the expiry date printed on the pack or if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.**

If it has expired or is damaged, return it to your pharmacist for disposal.

**If you are not sure whether you should start using this medicine, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.**

#### *Before you start to use it*

**Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have allergies to any other medicines, foods or preservatives.**

**If you have not told your doctor or pharmacist about any of the above, tell them before you start using Zostrix HP.**

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### How to use Zostrix HP

**Follow all directions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist carefully.**

They may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.

**If you do not understand the instructions in this leaflet, ask your doctor or pharmacist for help.**

#### *How to use it*

**Zostrix HP is for external use only.**

Adults and children 2 years of age and older: Apply Zostrix HP to affected area 3 to 4 times daily.

1. Apply just enough to cover the affected area (a small fingertip is usually enough).
2. Massage Zostrix HP cream into the skin on the front, back and sides of the affected area until no residue remains.
3. Unless treating hands, always wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after the application and avoid contact with sensitive areas, such as eyes, mouth and genitalia.

After rubbing in Zostrix HP as completely as possible, any excess cream may be gently removed with a disposable tissue.

If Zostrix HP is found to irritate fingers, a disposable glove or finger cot may be used for Zostrix HP application.

Zostrix HP is not a heat rub and as such it works differently, it is vitally important to follow the above steps to be able to achieve the full effect.

#### *How long to use it*

Zostrix HP should be used continuously 3 to 4 times a day for 6 weeks to achieve the full benefit.

Because of the way Zostrix HP works, relief may not occur immediately and improvement may be gradual.

The time required varies from person to person, although most have noticeable relief after 2 weeks of treatment.

In some cases it is necessary to use Zostrix HP for 4 to 6 weeks before pain is relieved.

Once pain relief occurs, you should continue to use this medicine as long as needed.

When it is discontinued, pain may recur in a few days or weeks. If pain recurs, treatment should be restarted.

Zostrix HP can be used for as long as it is needed.

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### While you are using Zostrix HP

#### *Things you must do*

- Apply small amounts frequently and regularly (3 to 4 times a day).
- Apply everyday (it may take 4 to 6 weeks before pain is relieved).
- Wash hands after application (unless treating hands).

#### *Things you must not do*

- Do not apply Zostrix HP when shingles are active. This product should only be used for the relief of the pain that can follow shingles.

- Do not apply a large amount of Zostrix HP in the affected area, little and often is the rule to follow.
- Do not apply Zostrix HP on broken, cracked or irritated skin. Do not apply it inside mouth, ear, nose or genitals.
- Avoid contact with eyes and other sensitive areas.
- If possible, avoid washing treated area for at least 30 minutes after application.
- Do not bandage tightly.

#### *Things to be careful of*

Zostrix HP is for external use only. Use strictly as directed.

If condition worsens, or if symptoms persist for more than 28 days (14 days with post-herpetic neuralgia), discontinue use of this product and consult your doctor.

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### Side effects

**Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are using Zostrix HP.**

This medicine may help most people with the pain associated with medically diagnosed painful diabetic neuropathy (pain caused by nerve damage in people with diabetes) or post-herpetic neuralgia (the pain that comes after shingles) but it may have unwanted side effects in a few people. All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical attention if you get some side effects.

**Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.**

Zostrix HP may cause a temporary burning sensation when applied. This sensation is usually temporary and it should diminish after 2 weeks of use. This burning is observed more frequently if Zostrix HP is used less than 3 times a day.

Redness or rash may occur on the skin where the cream was applied.

Cough, runny nose, rhinitis and/or breathing problems may occur when the cream dries on the skin and airborne capsaicin enters the respiratory system.

**Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these occur and they worry you.**

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### After using Zostrix HP

#### *Storage*

**Keep your tube of cream in the box until it is time to use it.**

**Keep your cream in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 25°C.**

**Do not store Zostrix HP or any other medicine in the bathroom or near a sink. Do not leave it on a window sill or in the car.**

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

**Keep it where children cannot reach it.**

A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

### *Disposal*

**If your doctor tells you to stop using this medicine or the expiry date has passed, ask your pharmacist what to do with any medicine that is left over.**

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### Product description

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#### *What it looks like*

Zostrix HP is a white cream in an aluminium tube enclosed in a cardboard carton

It is available in a 45g tube.

#### *Ingredients*

Zostrix HP contains 0.075% w/w of capsaicin as the active ingredient. It also contains:

- Arlancel 165
- Benzyl alcohol
- Cetyl alcohol
- Isopropyl myristate
- Soft white paraffin
- Sorbitol solution
- Purified water

This medicine does not contain lactose, sucrose, gluten, tartrazine or any azo dyes.

#### *Sponsor*

Zostrix HP is distributed in Australia by:  
Actor Pharmaceuticals Pty Ltd,  
Level 6, 50 Berry Street, North Sydney,  
NSW 2060, Australia

Medical Information: 1800 322 690

“Zostrix” is a registered trademark.

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