Potassium Permanganate Solution

Patient Information

The aim of this leaflet is to give you information about Potassium Permanganate Solution.

What is Potassium Permanganate Solution?
Potassium Permanganate Solution is a mild antiseptic and drying agent which can be used on weeping and infected areas of the skin. It can be used as a soak for treating small areas such as hands and feet or added to your bath to treat your whole body.

You can make the solution by dissolving either Potassium Permanganate crystals or Potassium Permanganate tablets called “Permitabs”.

How do I dissolve Potassium Permanganate Crystals?
Using a teaspoon put a few crystals (5 – 6) into an old jug and add 250ml of hot tap water. Stir until the crystals are completely dissolved and you will have a purple liquid, Potassium Permanganate Solution.

How do I dissolve Potassium Permanganate tablets, ‘Permitabs’?
Place one tablet into an old jug and add 500ml of hot tap water. Stir until the tablet dissolves and you will have a purple liquid, Potassium Permanganate Solution.

For use as a soak:
Pour a small amount of purple liquid (Potassium Permanganate Solution) into a basin containing warm water until the water turns “pale pink”.

- If using for hands and feet, soak in water for approximately 10 minutes or until the water changes colour to orange/brown.

- If you are treating a small area on a particular part of the body, for example chest area only, soak gauze swabs or clean cloth in the purple liquid (Potassium Permanganate Solution) and apply to the affected area for 10 minutes.

After soaking, dry with an old soft towel. Please be aware this may become stained.

For use in the bath:
Fill the bath as normal and then add a small amount of the purple liquid (Potassium Permanganate Solution) until the water turns “pale pink”.

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You will need to dissolve more than one tablet. One tablet dissolved into four litres of water provides the correct strength.

- Soak for approximately 10 minutes or until the water changes colour to orange/brown.

After soaking, dry with an old soft towel. Please be aware this may become stained.

When your skin has improved, for example, no longer weeping, or the infection has cleared; you can stop using the Potassium Permanganate unless otherwise directed by your doctor.

**Important**

- Keep crystals/Permitabs out of reach of children.
- If swallowed seek medical advice immediately.
- When Potassium Permanganate crystals/Permitabs are diluted and used as described they are entirely safe.
- Always use a jug or similar item for dilution. Do not put crystals/Permitabs directly into the bath or basin as this can leave permanent staining.
- Always dissolve crystals/Permitabs correctly; the final solution should be “pale pink”. You do not gain any extra benefit from a stronger/darker solution – only staining of both skin and utensils.
- Staining of the skin and nails usually fades.
- Keep away from furniture and clothes as this may cause permanent staining.

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Developed by the Dermatology Patient Information Group and reviewed by medical and nursing staff with the help of patients

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