



## Accurate Clinic

2401 Veterans Memorial Blvd. Suite 16  
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[www.AccurateClinic.com](http://www.AccurateClinic.com)

Medications applied on the skin are considered to be **topical** when they are designed to act only locally on the tissues to which they are applied - common examples include Lidoderm patches, Voltaren Gel and Pennsaid. Medications applied on the skin are considered to be **transdermal** when they are designed to be absorbed through the skin to enter the blood stream and provide systemic benefits - common examples include fentanyl patches and Butrans patches.

Topical medications have certain advantages over those taken by mouth, primarily fewer side effects. Because they do not go into the stomach, there is little likelihood of nausea or diarrhea. And because there is little to no absorption into the blood stream, there is little likelihood of systemic side effects such as drowsiness or dizziness. And toxicity to the brain, kidney and liver is reduced.

While there are a few topical medications commercially available such as Lidoderm patches, Voltaren Gel and Pennsaid, there are many other medications that can be used topically that can be very effective in pain management. Because they are not available commercially, it requires that they be custom **compounded** by specialized compounding pharmacies. The big advantage to compounding a medication is that multiple medications can be included in one cream or gel for added benefit.

At Accurate Clinic we provide prescriptions for compounded topical medications for the purpose of treating inflammation and pain. The medications included are established in their effectiveness and safety and all are FDA approved medications. Most of them will be familiar and quite possibly ones that you have taken orally. It is hoped that their use topically will be more effective with minimal to no side effects, most commonly limited to dry or irritated skin. There may be some systemic effects such as drowsiness but they are likely to be minimal if at all.

One disadvantage to applying creams or gels is the potential difficulty in regulating dosage. For this reason, compounded medications are provided in pumps designed to release specific dosed-amounts. Please follow your physician's dosing instructions to avoid problems.

Some of the medications to be compounded topically include:

### **Amitriptyline**

Otherwise known as Elavil, amitriptyline is considered an antidepressant but in fact is not only used frequently as a sleep aid but it can be very effective in treating nerve pain, especially when applied topically. Its common side effects of drowsiness and dry mouth are usually avoided with topical use.

### **Baclofen**

Commonly used orally for muscle spasm, it is also an effective topical agent for nerve pain.

### **Cyclobenzaprine**

Otherwise known as Flexeril, it is commonly used orally for muscle spasm, but is also an effective topical agent for nerve pain.

### **Diclofenac**

Diclofenac is an NSAID, an anti-inflammatory used to reduce the pain and swelling associated with inflammation.

### **Gabapentin**

Well known for reducing sharp, stabbing and burning pain, it is particularly effective topically with less of its side effects such as drowsiness and weight gain.



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### **Ketamine**

Used in anaesthesia, ketamine is very effective for the neuropathic pain associated with CRPS/RSD and can help reduce the burning pain of fibromyalgia and peripheral neuropathy as well as the sharp and stabbing pain associated with low back and neck pain.

### **Lidocaine**

Commonly used as the injectable anesthetic for dental work and placing stitches, it also works topically to reduce pain, especially the nerve pain of neuropathy.

### **Magnesium Chloride**

Like the Magnesium found in Epsom salts, Magnesium Chloride cream is effective for muscle pain and spasm.