

Skin Care Product Review: Desitin 40% Zinc Oxide

Skin protection is a big deal down here, especially if you plan to be in the water for 5-8 hours. The sun is fierce. I have gone with Zinc Oxide 20%, but over the swims have become disappointed in the covering. After reading an email from a swimmer, I learned that she has a pharmacist mix her a 40% dose. She said she paid some \$60 for a 1-pound jar. I asked about this at a Publix Supermarket Pharmacy. The chemist scratched his head and then looked at his computer. His face lit up and he motioned me to follow him. He led me to the baby products section of the store. He grabbed and held out two products before my eyes. Desitin and Boudreaux's Butt Paste. Both these products have Zinc Oxide at my requested 40%!

I bought the pound jar of the Desitin and a 4-oz. tube of the Butt Paste. In my "58 Is Great" swim, I used the Desitin. Larry applied it with a latex throw away glove I provided. I was pleasantly amazed at the protection it provided. The back of my calves on the completion of the swim appeared to be as covered as at the start. I did notice a bit of burn in the goggle area of my face (areas where Larry was not as exact in the application). I give high marks to the Desitin Maximum Strength Paste (40% Zinc Oxide) when it comes to protecting my skin. The pound jar of Desitin cost me \$15.59 (a big savings over \$60).

There are a few negatives. The Desitin is made with fish oil, which means there is a stink factor. While unpleasant, it is not vile. Once I was swimming, the smell factor played no part. Another negative is the stain you will inherit on your swimsuit. There is no way the white stains on my suit will ever come out. A third negative is the clean-up factor. I assigned my 15-year-old daughter, Jane, this role. Though unhappy, she managed to clean me up. You need vegetable oil and lots of paper towels. Then you will need to lather and rinse at least 2 times in the shower to wash the oil off. The positive is that you skin will feel pretty soft after it's all over!

If you want to avoid burning your skin in the harsh sun and salt water of the Florida Keys, this is my recommendation. My plan is to test the Butt Paste in my 59th Swim. The Butt Paste has no fish oil, but touts a lavender scent. I plan to review it after that swim. For the 4-oz. tube of Butt Paste, I paid \$7.99. I would think a solo swimmer could get two applications from a 4-oz. tube. Don't forget the disposable latex gloves, generic vegetable oil and a roll of paper towels!

Another tip: Before my kayaker throws the disposable gloves away, I have him/her put a glob of Vaseline under my armpits to avoid chafing. I realized in this last swim that Zinc Oxide 40% will suffice in this area. The Zinc product has mineral or petroleum oil in it, so save a step and use your zinc exclusively on your body AND under your arms.