



SKIN & BEAUTY CENTER
Cosmetic, Medical and Surgical Dermatology

DermlA.com

BURBANK

191 S. Buena Vista St. Suite 475
Burbank, CA 91505
T: (818) 842-8000
F: (818) 842-3208

SANTA CLARITA

27879 Smyth Drive
Valencia, CA 91355
T: (877) 822-2223
F: (323) 935-8804



NORTHRIDGE

9535 Reseda Blvd. Suite 304
Northridge, CA 91324
T: (818) 886-3884
F: (818) 886-5418

William Coleman, MD
David Friedman, MD
Ava Khosraviani, MD
Payam Saadat, MD
Manjunath Vadmal, MD
Kristen Ochsner, PA-C
Jenna Trubschenck, M.S. PA-C

Generic Creams and Prescriptions

The Critical Role of Dermatologic Vehicles in the Management of Cutaneous Disorders

In addition to the "active" drug, topical agents are composed of a wide variety of ingredients that contribute to the product's bioavailability, physical stability, chemical stability, and freedom from contamination, and patient acceptability. Some of these "non-therapeutic" components of topical agents include:

Humectants (propylene glycol, sorbitol, glycerine, etc.); Preservatives: (parabens, sorbic acid, benzyl alcohol, benzoic acid); Emulsifiers: (Surfactants: [sodium lauryl sulfate, polysorbates]), (Polymers: [gum arabic, gelatin, Pemulen]), (Solids: [aluminum hydroxide, Veegum]); Bodying agents: (beeswax, cetyl alcohol, petrolatum, stearic acid, etc.); Antioxidants; Other: (silicones, dimethicone, petrolatum.)

These vehicles, highly complex and sophisticated compounds, are critical to augmenting the potency and minimizing the toxicity of topical drugs.

The only reliable guide to a vehicle's performance is its clinical efficacy. Such information may be gleaned from the dermatologic literature and from the FDA-mandated clinical trials performed by the manufacturer. This information should be available from the manufacturer on request.

Casual attempts to modify any given component of a topical vehicle can potentially influence the efficacy of the product and may lead to unforeseen and even harmful consequences.

Use of the vasoconstrictor assay has shown enormous variation in potency among generic and name-brand fluorinated corticosteroid creams and ointments. The difference in potencies is enough to predict significant differences in their clinical effectiveness. Caveat prescriptor!

Conclusion

The use of topical corticosteroids is not a panacea but rather a component in the overall management of a variety of unrelated and common dermatologic disorders, and their use must be individualized to the disorder itself, the location of the disease, and the natural history of the process. Without recognition of such factors, these serviceable medications can be abused or rendered ineffective. It is important to explain to the patient carefully the anticipated effects of the drugs, as well as their potential for adverse side reactions.