Appendix SI

RESULTS

Local pruritus (itch) intensity

**Group I: Hydrocortisone vs. Cer-Mg.** Local itch intensity, as assessed by VAS, decreased significantly at week 3 and week 6 after both treatments (SFig. 1).

The decrease in VAS from baseline (ΔPruritus) after hydrocortisone and Cer-Mg differed significantly at week 3; however, at week 6 the difference in ΔPruritus between the 2 treatments was not significant.

**Group II: EM vs. Cer-Mg.** As shown in SFig. 1 a significant decrease of VAS was observed after Cer-Mg treatment at both time-points, while VAS after EM did not change significantly from the baseline values. The reduction from baseline (ΔPruritus) was greater after Cer-Mg compared with EM at both time-points (Table II).

Skin surface pH

**Group I: Hydrocortisone vs. Cer-Mg.** The pH levels in both arms of the treatment did not change significantly over time. After 6 weeks a small, but statistical, significant difference exists between the 2 arms (SFig. 2).

**Group II: EM vs. Cer-Mg.** The pH values after Cer-Mg increased after 3 weeks of treatment from 5.6 (IQR: 5.3–5.9) to 5.7 (IQR: 5.5–6.0). Treatment with EM led to a pH increase from 5.6 (IQR: 5.3–5.9) at baseline to 5.8 (5.5–6.2) at week 3. No significant differences were detected between the treatments at any time-point (Table II).

Tolerability and subjective preference

No severe adverse events were recorded during the trial. No allergic reactions were observed in the HC and Cer-Mg study arms. Overall preference slightly favoured Cer-Mg cream in both groups (see SFig. 3).