

Dermato-cosmetics Meeting on October 25-28, 2000 in Toulouse, France

Dermato-cosmetics, also known as cosmeceuticals, are non-medical products used by dermatological patients or recommended by dermatologists for the care of various skin conditions where health and esthetics are common aims. Skin diseases are not only diseases that influence people's quality of life because of objectively impaired functions or involvement of the entire skin. Their esthetic influence is often even more important, and dermatological patients tend to enjoy the luxury of using elegant products and feeling comfortable, as a contrast to the ugliness of scaling, cracking, redness, etc. Diseased and unaffected conditions often coexist in the same patient or individual, sometimes visibly, sometimes invisibly. Dermato-cosmetics operate in the border zone between diseased and healthy skin and between objective alteration and subjective feeling.



Fig. 2. Dr. Yvon Gall, dermatologist and Associate Professor at the Toulouse University, Head of research and development.



Fig. 1. The newly built head office of the Pierre Fabre company, in the green surroundings of Castres. The whole building is a sculpture inspired by the yang-yin symbol.

The Pierre Fabre company, which recently organized a symposium chaired by Professors J.-H. Saurat and J.J. Voorhees on topical retinoids in conjunction with the 9th EADV, Geneva on October 25-28, organized a meeting for 20 Danish and Norwegian dermatologists in Castres (Fig. 1) and Avène near Toulouse, France. The meeting program included presentations by Dr. D. Black and Dr. Y. Gall (Fig. 2) on research methods like surface imaging and computerized evaluation, Doppler flowmetry (Fig. 3), high frequency ultrasound and 3D volumetric body recording by CCD cameras used to evaluate efficacy. Various in vitro assays to assess toxicity were presented. Mrs. C. Donzeau presented the Dermaweb site (Fig. 4) (<http://www.dermaweb.com>), of interest to doctors and their patients with a known allergy to certain product ingredients, since products in the Avène line that are free of a given ingredient can be searched and listed, and the allergen then avoided by the patients (not yet available for the

Ducray, Galenic, Klorane and Aderma lines). Dermatologists' access to the Dermaweb "club" is handled by regional representatives, see the addresses below. Dr. J. Serup reviewed circumstances surrounding the EC regulations of topical skin products and the special claims in a Danish official proposal soon to be presented in Brussels on proper efficacy documentation. The latter proposal emphasizes the randomized controlled



Fig. 3. Laser Doppler imaging of the cutaneous blood flow using the Swedish Lisca scanner, developed in Linköping.



Fig. 4. The Dermaweb dermatology program. On dermatologist's access, see text.

trial and the elements of good clinical practice. At the end of the program, the dermatologists enjoyed watching a case of acne being camouflaged by Mrs. Joëlle Nonni, who used a green and some toned covering products to create a result of artistic perfection. This fine art of making live moulages of unaesthetic skin look normal and natural seems to have been forgotten in modern laser times, although many dermatology patients would benefit from such a treatment if instructed properly. The meeting was concluded with a visit to the Avène Spa (Fig. 5), known for over a century for its fresh spring water. It is estimated that it takes 30-40 years for the water to filter from the top of the mountain through the rock, to finally appear in the spring. The Avène water is low in salts (0.25 g/l), as compared to Roche-Pousay (0.5 g/l), Vichy (5 g/l), and Uriage (11 g/l) water, and, of course, water from the Dead Sea (300 g/l) . The spa is used by psoriatics, atopics, and prurigo sufferers, as well as

people leading hectic lives and with a special need for rest and restoration.

With its 8,000 employees, Pierre Fabre is the leading producer of dermato-cosmetics in France. The company was founded in 1961 and has its origin in a pharmacy in Castres. Pierre Fabre also produces pharmaceuticals in the fields of oncology,

neurology, and cardiology, among others. Dermatocosmetic products are now available in 70 pharmacies in Denmark and a number of pharmacies in Norway. The distributor in Denmark is ITC, Box 38, Jægersborg Alle 24, DK-2920 Charlottenlund (phone +45-39906667, fax +45-39906665), and in Norway Dermo Apo AS, Kongensgt. 23, N-0153 Oslo (phone +47-22825190, fax +47-22825191). Dermatologists can obtain passwords to the Dermaweb through these distributors.

Jørgen Serup

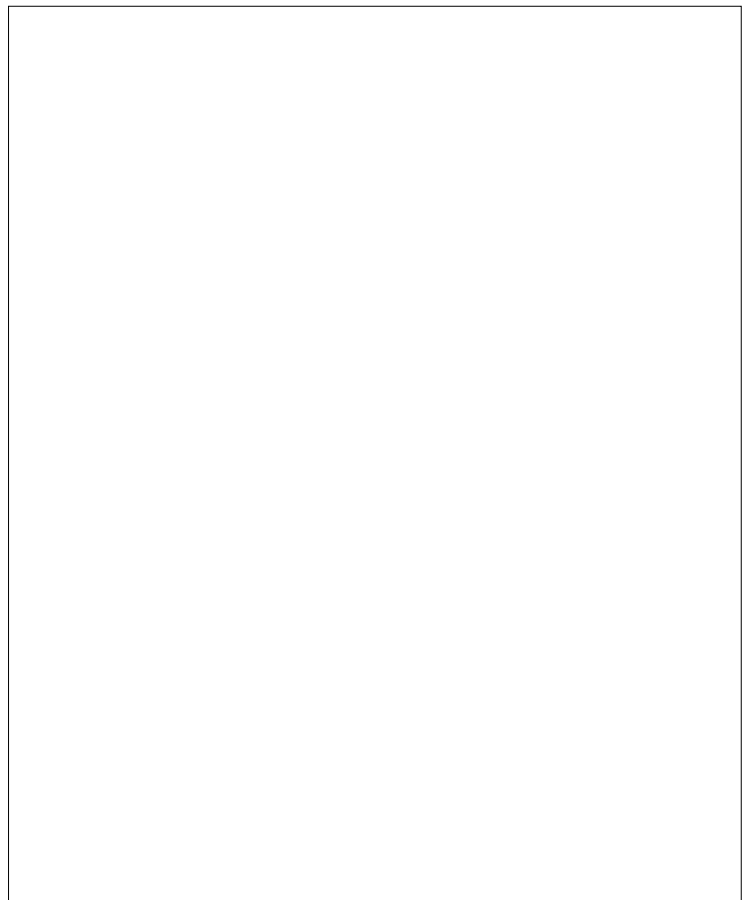


Fig. 5. Those were the days, the Avène Spa. A modern spa facility, affiliated with Hotel Val d'Orb, was built a few years ago.