Assessing the Value of Fusidic Acid in Dermatology

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Guest Editor: Donald Leung
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Dr ANTHONY C. CHU, Department of Dermatology, Hammersmith Hospitals Trust, Hammersmith Campus, Faculty of Medicine, Imperial College, London, W12 0NN, UK. E-mail: a.chu@imperial.ac.uk

Professor THOMAS L. DIEPGEN, Department of Social Medicine, Occupational & Environmental Dermatology, University of Heidelberg, Thibautstrasse. 3, DE-69115 Heidelberg, Germany. E-mail: Thomas.Diepgen@med.uni-heidelberg.de

Dr GEORGIOS LARIOΣ, Department of Dermatology, Andreas Sygros University Hospital, 5 Ionos Dragoumi Str, GR-16121 Athens, Greece.

Professor DONALD Y. M. LEUNG, National Jewish Medical and Research Center, 1400 Jackson Street, Room K926, Denver, CO 80206, USA. E-mail: leungd@njc.org

Dr BARRY H. LONG, Division of Dermatology, Women’s College Hospital, 76 Grenville Street, Toronto, ON, Canada M5S 1B2. E-mail: barry.long@sympatico.ca

Dr DIMITRIS RIGOPOULOS, Department of Dermatology, Andreas Sygros University Hospital, 5 Ionos Dragoumi Str, GR-16121 Athens, Greece. E-mail: drigop@hol.gr

Speakers at the LEO Symposium (left to right): Dr Tony Chu, Dr Dimitris Rigopoulos, Professor Donald Leung, Professor Thomas Diepgen, Dr Barry Long.
Chairman’s Introduction:
Assessing the value of fusidic acid in dermatology

This supplement covers the contents of a symposium that was held in Vienna, Austria, on 17 May 2007 at the 16th Congress of the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology.

Fusidic acid has been a mainstay in the treatment of dermatological infections, particularly those caused by Staphylococcus aureus, for many years. The aim of the symposium was to present a comprehensive account of the characteristics, clinical effectiveness and potential for resistance development of fusidic acid, placed in context with other drugs also used in dermatology. This compilation adds the results of newer studies, not previously reviewed, to those of older ones. It is timely, in light of the recent launch of a new fusidic acid/steroid combination formulation, namely fusidic acid 2%/betamethasone valerate 0.1% lipid cream (Fucicort® Lipid).

The first article, by Dr D. Rigopoulos, presents a brief overview of the value of fusidic acid for controlling S. aureus. This is followed by a review of the evidence for the clinical efficacy of plain fusidic acid formulations, by Dr B. Long. I then discuss the role of S. aureus in atopic eczema, highlighting the effects of superantigens released by the bacterium. The article by Dr T. Chu reviews the use of antibacterial/steroid combination therapy to combat the “vicious cycle” of dryness of the skin, inflammation and infection that is seen in infected eczema. Finally, Dr T. Diepgen’s paper reports on an interactive session in which case histories formed the basis for a discussion of treatment success factors and the importance of patient education.

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Donald Y. M. Leung
Edelstein Family Chair of Pediatric Allergy-Immunology
National Jewish Medical and Research Center
Denver, Colorado, USA
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