

CLINICAL TRIAL OF A NEW OINTMENT

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Several excellent antibiotic-cum-steroid ointments are available today. To these have been added Kanfotrex* containing hydrocortisone 1.0%, kanamycin 0.5% and amphomycin 0.5% in an oil-in-water base. This product has recently been tried in our department.

Kanamycin is a well-known antibiotic with a spectrum not unlike that of neomycin. It is bactericidally active against many Gram-positive, Gram-negative and acid-fast organisms, but relatively inactive against streptococci, pneumococci, pseudomonas and anaerobic organisms. It is ineffective against yeasts and fungi.¹ Manifestations of primary irritation or allergic sensitivity to kanamycin are 'singularly' absent.² The drug is remarkably stable and readily soluble.

Amphomycin is mainly active against Gram-positive organisms, including staphylococci and streptococci and has an antibacterial spectrum similar to bacitracin, but is stable in aqueous solution. It is not irritating and has a low sensitizing potential.³

These antibiotics, therefore, complement each other to provide an unusually broad spectrum.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Patients were instructed to use the ointment sparingly and to rub it well into the skin two or three times daily. Eighty-five patients were treated, all suffering from some type of eczema, as can be seen from Table I. This also illustrated our results, indicated as good, indifferent or a failure.

RESULTS

Out of 85 patients treated, 70 were completely satisfied with the treatment; in 10 the results were considered indeterminate and only in 5 was treatment judged to have failed.

The number of patients with atopic eczema, housewife's hands and contact dermatitis was small, totalling only 23. It seems significant to observe that 7 of the 10 patients with indifferent results came from this small group. On the other hand, only 3 patients with indeterminate results, and 2 in whom the treatment failed were encountered in the 62 patients where infection played some pathogenic role.

CONCLUSIONS

The combination of kanamycin and amphomycin with hydrocortisone in an oil-in-water type of ointment base proves to be a satisfying, effective and very useful topical remedy for infective and secondarily infected eczema. No incidence of primary irritation or allergic sensitivity was encountered.

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REFERENCES

1. Gourevitch, A. *et al.* (1958): *Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci.*, **76**, 31.
2. Blau, S. and Kanof, N. B. (1958): *Ibid.*, **76**, 228.
3. Tisch, D. E. *et al.* (1955): *Antibiotic Annual, 1954 - 1955*, p. 1011.

TABLE I. RESULTS OF TREATMENT IN 85 PATIENTS

Response	Infective eczema	Atopic eczema	Num. eczema	Stasis eczema	Housewife's hands	Contact dermatitis	Total
Good ..	35	6	15	6	3	5	70
Failure ..	2	2	—	1	—	—	5
Indifferent ..	2	3	1	—	2	2	10
Total ..	39	11	16	7	5	7	85

*Brand name, supplied by Bristol Laboratories South Africa (Pty.) Ltd.