Aveeno®

Formulated for dry skin (xerosis) in adults

A guide for pharmacists

About a third of adults live with dry skin (xerosis), which arises from disruptions to the skin's barrier function and/or lack of moisturising factors, both of which reduce skin hydration.[1,2]

Pharmacists should note that certain people are particularly prone to dry skin. For instance, up to about 60% of long-term care residents live with xerosis.[3] Pharmacists should consider whether factors such as inflammation, irritation, medications (eg statins, chemotherapy and diuretics), vitamin and mineral deficiencies (eg vitamins A and D, niacin, zinc, iron), passive and active smoking, co-morbidities (eg diabetes, thyroid disease and renal conditions), hormonal changes and genetic factors could disrupt barrier function and predispose to dry skin.[2,4,5] For example, targeted anticancer therapies increased the risk of xerosis almost three-fold (relative risk 2.99) compared with placebo.[6] Between 26% and 81% of people with type 2 diabetes experience xerosis.[7]

Pharmacists should differentiate xerosis from related conditions such as eczema (red and itchy) and psoriasis (flaky, scaley skin)[8,9] and refer when appropriate (table 1). Xerosis patients typically report skin dryness, itch or a tight, painful or burning sensation in their skin.[1,2] Their skin may appear dry, scaly, rough, dull, greyish with a coarse and wrinkled texture.[1,2] Patients with severe xerosis can show erythema and fissures.[2] Xerosis can affect any part of the body, but is most common in areas with relatively few sebaceous glands, such as the lower legs, forearms, hands and feet.[1,2]

Table 1: Red flags[8]

Arrange immediate hospital admission	Suspected eczema herpeticum (rapidly worsening, painful eczema; clustered blisters; 'punched out' erosions)
Consider referral to a GP or dermatologist	The diagnosis is uncertain
	Eczema is not adequately controlled with current treatment
	Secondary infection (especially if recurrent)
	High risk of complications
	Treatment advice is needed
	Suspected food allergy



Emollients: the foundation of care for dry skin

Pharmacists should advise xerosis patients to limit exposure to triggers and exacerbating factors (eg cold weather, air conditioners, harsh cleansers or soaps, bathing in hot water, powders that dry skin) and ensure that any diseases associated with dry skin (eg diabetes) are well controlled.[1,3,4]

Emollients alleviate symptoms and signs of xerosis and improve patients' quality of life.[4] So, pharmacists should advise patients to apply emollients twice daily and to use emollients after bathing and use emollients as soap substitutes.[3]

Pharmacists should also advise patients to treat flares as soon as signs and symptoms emerge.[10,11] Emollients are the first-line therapy during acute flares and as maintenance therapy during remission. Pharmacists should explain that emollients can be used with, when necessary, other active treatments and can have steroid-sparing effects.[12,13]

Pharmacists should advise patients and caregivers to apply emollients as often as needed to keep skin well moisturised and in good condition (ideally, at least 3-4 times a day). Pharmacists should explain that patients should gently smooth (do not rub) emollients into their skin in the direction of hair growth; this reduces the risk of hair follicles getting blocked.[10,14]

Improving barrier function

Adherence to emollients can be poor, which is a leading cause of treatment failure.[15] Pharmacists can address poor adherence by, for example, providing information about xerosis and its treatment, and offering clear instructions about use and application.[1] Pharmacists could suggest that caregivers apply the formulation to difficult-to-reach areas.[1]

Pharmacists should explore whether patients are not using topical preparations because of, for example, greasiness, an unpleasant odour, side-effects, such as stinging, itching or burning, or difficulty with application.[1,15] A change in product may overcome these barriers to adherence.

Pharmacists can help patients select a well-tolerated topical preparation based on the presentation and patient preference that meets the patient's needs helps improve adherence.[1] The Aveeno range includes a variety of products with different ingredients that help healthcare professionals and patients reach a joint decision about emollients and other aspects of management. Sometimes patients try several products before finding the one that suits them best.

AVEENO formulated for dry skin

AVEENO products are formulated with ingredients scientifically shown to hydrate and moisturise dry skin.

Emollients (moisturisers) form an occlusive layer and soften the skin by offering a source of lipids.[16] Emollient and occlusive components increase moisture in the stratum corneum. Emollients also contain humectants that draw water into the stratum corneum.[17]

Oats are rich in starches and beta-glucan that protect skin and maintain hydration. Oat saponins foam in water and cleanse skin.[18] Oats are also prebiotics that help restore and maintain a healthy skin microbiome and increase the production of lactic acid, a natural moisturising factor that helps maintain the skin's normal slightly acidic pH.[19]

Ceramides are lipids found mainly in the stratum corneum. Topical ceramides can repair the lipid architecture that is damaged by dry skin and restore barrier function.[20]

Shea butter, extracted from the kernels of the sheu tree, is rich in lipids.[21]



Using Aveeno® for adults prone to dry skin



Aveeno® Daily Moisturising for skin that looks normal to dry and feels dull and/or ashy. Nourishing oat and rich emollients helps strengthen the skin's natural barrier to help protect the skin against external triggers and water loss.



Aveeno® Skin Relief for skin that looks dry and tight, and feels flaky and/or dry. Soothing triple oat complex and shea butter strengthen the skin's natural barrier to help protect the skin against external triggers. Aveeno® Skin Relief also supports the skin's natural ceramide production.



Aveeno® Dermexa for skin that looks very dry and/or the patient reports itch and that the skin is sensitive. Soothing triple oat complex and ceramides restores the skin's optimal pH and microbiome.

Scan the QR code to view the products in each range

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