

Drug	Formulation	Indication	Less suitable because	Prescribing in 2010 ^a		Practice
				Scripts	£000	No. patients
<i>Calamine</i>		pruritus, stings	ineffective for pruritus and should not be used for insect stings	133 000	117	
<i>Topical local anaesthetics</i>			marginally effective and may occasionally cause sensitisation	5800	17	

Table 1. Topical skin preparations classed as less suitable for prescribing by the *BNF* and its rationale for designation ^aGP prescribing, England

Drug	Formulation	Indication	Less suitable because	Prescribing in 2010 ^a		Practice No. patients
				Scrips	£000	
<i>Topical antihistamines</i>		pruritus, stings	may be absorbed, especially through mucosal surfaces; excessive application should be avoided; use for no more than about 3 days not generally suitable for young children	12 300	118	
<i>Abrasive agents</i>	Brasivol	acne	not considered beneficial	3300	13	
<i>Salicylic acid</i>	Acnisal	acne	not considered beneficial in acne: salicylic acid is irritant and may cause dermatitis. readily absorbed through the skin: prolonged use should be avoided	4400	18	
	Phytex	fungal infection	superseded by more effective treatments	4500	15	
<i>Neomycin sulphate</i>	neomycin cream BPC	bacterial infection	serious risk of ototoxicity in children, the elderly and those with renal impairment	200	17	
<i>Idoxuridine in dimethyl sulfoxide</i>	Herpid	herpes zoster	little value	1000	7	
<i>Benzyl benzoate</i>	benzyl benzoate application BP	scabies	less effective than malathion or permethrin irritant and should not be used for children	600	2	
<i>Malathion</i>	Prioderm cream shampoo	head lice	shampoos for head lice consistently underdose and therefore encourage the development of resistance	300	1	
	Quellada M cream shampoo					
<i>Permethrin</i>	Lyclear Crème Rinse			34 800	143	
<i>Topical circulatory preparations</i>	Hirudoid	to improve circulation in conditions such as bruising, superficial thrombophlebitis, chilblains and varicose veins	little value	148 800	724	

Table 1. Topical skin preparations classed as less suitable for prescribing by the *BNF* and its rationale for designation ^aGP prescribing, England (cont.)