



Corticosteroids (steroids)

What are the aims of this patient information leaflet?

This leaflet has been written to help you understand more about your contact allergy. It tells you what a contact allergy is, what causes this allergy and what you can do about it.

What is contact allergy?

Dermatitis, also known as eczema, describes a type of inflammation of the skin. Contact dermatitis or contact eczema is a term used when this inflammation is caused by direct or indirect skin contact with something in your environment. Allergic contact dermatitis occurs when your immune system causes allergy to a very specific chemical or substance that has been in contact with the skin.

What causes your specific allergy?

Your [patch tests](#) indicate that you have a contact allergy to **Corticosteroids (steroids)**.

What is Corticosteroids (steroids)?

Corticosteroids (commonly just called steroids) are chemical hormones that have many functions in the body. They are not the same as anabolic steroids. Medications that contain synthetic steroids are used to suppress inflammation and autoimmune conditions. They are used in topical treatments for conditions like eczema or psoriasis, inhalers for asthma, eye drops, mouth washes and sometimes enemas for inflammatory bowel disease. They can also be used in tablets and infusions. It is important to remember that whilst you have been found to be allergic to one or more steroids when used on the skin, they are unlikely to cause a reaction when taken via the mouth or as an infusion. This is important to remember because they can be lifesaving.

What are some products that contain Corticosteroids (steroids)?

Steroid	Preparations that contain this include
Betamethasone-17-Valerate	Betnovate®, Betnovate RD®, Audivate®, Betesil plasters®, Bettamousse®, Betacap®
Clobetasol-17-propionate	Etrivex shampoo®, Dermovate®, Clobaderm®
Clobetasone butyrate	Eumovate®, Trimovate cream®
Dexamethasone-21-phosphate	Dexamethasone oral solution, Dexafree Eye Drops®, Dropodex® eye drops®, Eythalm®, Maxidex®, Puradex®, Etacortilen®
Hydrocortisone-17-butyrate	Locoid®
Mometasone furoate	Elocon®
Tixocortol-21-pivalate (Hydrocortisone acetate)	Daktacort®, Canesten HC®, E45HC®, Anusol HC®, Proctosedyl® ointment / suppositories, Urinoid® ointment / suppositories, Gentisone HC® ear drops, Otosporin® ear drops
Triamcinolone acetonide	Adcortyl®, Kenalog®, Nasacort nasal spray®

Budesonide	Pulmicort®, Symbicort®, Budelin® inhalers, Budesonide nebulisers and nasal sprays, Budenofalk® suppository, Entocort® enema,
Fluocinolone actetonide	Synalar®
Fluticasone propionate	Cutivate® ointment; Fluticasone cream

Cross reaction of steroids

Occasionally, if you are allergic to one steroid, you can react to another, but this is not always the case.

Allergy to a steroid containing preparation

Sometimes you may be allergic to an ingredient in a steroid preparation rather than the steroid itself. This means you may have a reaction when using the preparation even if you are not allergic to the steroid within it. You may have no issue with using a different preparation containing the same steroid.

Remember, always check the label, these lists can never be complete and ingredients change.

How can I manage my allergy?

This means that you should avoid putting products containing Corticosteroids (steroids) onto your skin in the future.

Always check the ingredient listing on the product, package or package insert as these lists can never be complete and ingredients change. This is particularly important for any products purchased outside the EU where some allergens may not be banned.

What does steroid contact allergy look like?

It is likely to come up as a red, itchy rash that is more prominent around the edges of where you applied the medication. It can occur on and around the lips with steroid inhalers.

Repeated Open Application Test (ROAT)

If you are unsure if you have an allergy to a steroid such as a topical cream or eye drop, you can perform a test similar to a patch test at home. A repeated open application test (ROAT), is where you apply some of the medication to an area like your inner forearm (in the same place), twice a day for two weeks. You might want to mark the outline so you know you are putting it in the same place.

Always ensure the medication is appropriate to be applied to the skin before proceeding. It is not recommended to do this for preparations that are used internally such as enemas.

Self-care (what can I do?)

Always check the ingredient listing on the product, package or package insert as these lists can never be complete and ingredients change. This is particularly important for any products purchased outside the EU where some allergens may not be banned.

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