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Prescribing emollients

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It is important to encourage self care whenever possible (NHS England, 2018). Self care is recommended for mild dry skin and mild irritant dermatitis, however it is appropriate to prescribe emollients for long term conditions including eczema (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), 2013; National Eczema Society, 2018).

The British National Formulary (BNF) (2020) suggests suitable quantities of dermatological preparations to be prescribed for specific areas of the body (Table 1).

QUESTION 1

Complete the table (Table 2) with the quantity of emollient to prescribe for eczema for one month

British National Formulary. Atopic eczema in under 12s. 2013. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs44/chapter/Quality-statement-4-Provision-of-emollients>

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. Atopic eczema in under 12s. 2013. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs44/chapter/Quality-statement-4-Provision-of-emollients> (accessed 2 September 2020)

National Eczema Society. Emollient prescribing for eczema: information for patients. 2018. <https://eczema.org/wp-content/uploads/Emollient-prescribing-guidance-for-patients-and-primary-care-prescribers.pdf> (accessed 24 August 2020)

NHS Clinical Commissioners. Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs. 2017. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf> (accessed 24 August 2020)

Table 1. Suitable quantities of dermatological preparations to be prescribed for specific areas of the body

Area of body	Creams and Ointments	Lotions
Face	15–30 g	100 ml
Both hands	25–50 g	200 ml
Scalp	50–100 g	200 ml
Both arms or both legs	100–200 g	200 ml
Trunk	400 g	500 ml
Groins and genitalia	15–25 g	100 ml

Source: NICE, 2020

Table 2. Prescribing emollient for eczema for one month

Emollient	Pack sizes available	Adult or child	Body part affected	Quantity to prescribe for one month
Exocream	50 g, 500 g	Adult	Face	
Epimax ExCetra cream	100 g, 500 g	Child	Whole body	
Epimax Oatmeal cream	500 g	Adult	Trunk	
Epimax Original cream	100 g, 500 g	Adult	Both legs	
Zero Double gel	100 g, 500 g	Child	Whole Body	
Zeroderm ointment	125 g, 500 g	Adult	Both hands	
Epimax ointment	125 g, 500 g	Child	Whole body	
Cetraben	125 g, 450 g	Child	Whole body	
Hydromol ointment	125 g, 500 g	Adult	Mild dry skin on both legs	

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