

Leo Dinner symposium

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Date: 10 August 2018
Venue: Eaton Hong Kong Hotel,
Yau Ma Tei, Hong Kong
Organiser: Hong Kong Society of Dermatology
and Venereology

Role of topical treatments for difficult-to-treat psoriasis

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Psoriasis is a chronic disease with a significant impact on patients'-reported quality of life and psychosocial outcomes. Choice of therapies for psoriasis includes topical therapy, phototherapy, systemic and biologic therapy. Psoriasis patients with mild localised skin involvement only are treated with topical therapy. Patients with moderate to severe psoriasis are often treated with systemic, biologic or phototherapy.

Apart from disease severity, the type of treatment also depends on any special skin locations, such as scalp psoriasis. Topical treatments have an important role for patients with high psoriasis disease severity who cannot be put on systemic or biologic treatment. Topical treatments are also used in patients with recurring psoriasis or patients on biologics who still have lesions that require further treatment.

Combining topical steroid with a Vitamin D3 analogue can improve efficacy and decrease skin irritation in the short term. In the long term, it can induce a steroid-sparing effect and reduce risk of skin atrophy. For potent topical steroids, intermittent use is suggested when beyond four weeks of treatment.

Learning points:

There should be a tailor-made treatment approach for psoriasis patients with different disease severity and skin locations.