



GLOBAL SKIN HEALTH

ERA OF TOPICAL CORTICOSTEROIDS AND ITS COMBINATIONS

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BACKGROUND: Topical corticosteroids are perceived as an easy, accessible and cheap way to get rid of cutaneous diseases by the Indian population.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To analyze the cause, magnitude and clinical features of topical steroid misuse
- 2) To analyze cultural pattern of self medication and easy provision of medications over-the-counter

MATERIALS AND METHODS: Patient reporting to outpatient department (OPD) were asked about their current and past use of over-the-counter topical formulations and the cause of application.

Study Setting: Out Patient Department of Dermatology, Venereology and Leprology, in Tertiary health centre's of Delhi

Study Design: A prospective study

Study Duration: December 2014- August 2017

RESULTS: An average of 59,250 patients were screened, of which 23,108 (39%) were using topical corticosteroids (TC), Out Of these 14,327(62%) were females, age from 15-65 years and 8781(38%) were males. Plain Topical corticosteroids or combination was used in Fungal diseases in 6815 patients (29.49%), fairness/general purpose cream 6371(27.57%), Melasma 5288 patients (22.88%), Acne vulagris 4386 (18.98%) and other causes e.g pyoderma 248 (1.07%)

Compared to men where the topical steroid abuse was at younger age, in women the abuse was more in middle aged group.

A non-physician recommendation for TC use was obtained in 14,558 (63%) patients. Of these, 13,146 (90.3%) were for potent/super-potent steroids. Physician prescriptions were 8550, out of these 7746 (90.6%) were from non-dermatologists. Adverse effects were seen in 19,226 (83.2%) TC users. Exacerbation of Tinea was the most common adverse effect seen.

CONCLUSION: Topical steroids are the most commonly abused topicals for almost all the





cutaneous disorders. Easy availability and low cost increases the chances of abuse.

LIMITATIONS: Multicentric study in different states and a combined consenses will show the real face of the epidemic.

