

Scientists to test new eczema cream

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Skin experts are to test a new cream for the treatment of eczema after trials of an oral version of the drug reduced patients' symptoms by 35% within a month.

University of Manchester researchers in the Dermatology Unit at Salford Royal Hospital will ask 25 adult volunteers to apply the [cream](#) to affected areas of their skin for a period of three months.

The scientists will then use internationally-recognised clinical tests to judge how effective the new medicine has been at relieving eczema symptoms.

Dr Neil Gibbs, who is leading the study, said: "Eczema is a long-term [skin disease](#) that affects about 20% of infants and 5% of adults in the UK. There is currently no known cure for the disease which results in a variety of symptoms, including redness or swelling and cracked, dry, itchy or bleeding skin.

"In recent years, it has become more widely recognised that one of the most important features of [skin conditions](#) like eczema is a reduced ability of the skin to protect against dirt, infections and other nasties that get in and cause inflammation.

"This loss of normal skin barrier function is what our new treatments are targeting; the idea is that if we help the skin of eczema patients to repair itself it becomes less 'leaky' and more resistant to potential contaminants."

The group, headed by world-renowned dermatologist Professor Chris Griffiths, has attracted grant funding from the University of Manchester Intellectual Property (UMIP) company and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) to develop the new treatments and conduct clinical studies.

“Our results so far have been very encouraging,” added Dr Gibbs. “We have developed a once-a-day oral eczema treatment, which has proven very safe and reduces eczema by 35% over a month’s use.

“We have now developed a new cream version of the treatment and we will be conducting a study with [eczema](#) patients at Salford Royal Hospital to find out whether the same active ingredient is as effective in the cream formulation.”

A spin-out company, Curapel Ltd, has been set up to attract further interest in the new treatments. The company was named ‘Biomedical Project of the Year’ in the Northwest Regional Development Agency’s BioNow awards last year.

More information: Further details about the study can be found at: www.medicine.manchester.ac.uk/...ological/volunteers/

Provided by University of Manchester

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