

New Techniques

The common coffee stirrer as a perfect application tool for imiquimod

Pérola: Mexedor de café como aplicador perfeito para imiquimod

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ABSTRACT

The proper application of topical medications is a key factor in their effectiveness. The common coffee stirrer with rounded edges: an ideal application tool for imiquimod.

Keywords: immunomodulation; carcinoma, basal Cell; Bowen's Disease

RESUMO

A aplicação adequada de medicações tópicas é fator fundamental para eficácia. Apresenta-se um aplicador ideal para imiquimod: mexedor de café com borda redonda.

Palavras-chave: imunomodulação; carcinoma basocelular; doença de Bowen

Imiquimod is a topical immunomodulator used as an alternative^{1,2} or adjuvant treatment to surgical³ and cryosurgical⁴ treatment of skin cancer. It has typically been used on a treatment basis of four days a week for 16 weeks.

It is usually applied to the treated area using the fingertips. Nevertheless, this application method is not 100% accurate in that some product residue can reach the subungual region, complicating its removal and even causing inflammation. Applying the product by finger on small or periorificial lesions can be difficult, leading to a waste of product and the risk of getting it in contact with the eyelashes and conjunctiva. Excessive eye irritation can reduce treatment adherence in patients.

Alternatively, a domestic application tool – a flexible swab – can be used, however the cotton is absorbent and may at the same time remove the medication, and often leave fragments of cotton bits, which may cause a foreign body reaction.



FIGURE 1: Proper use of imiquimod with the aid of an ideal disposable application tool, in the adjuvant treatment of a periocular basal cell carcinoma. The ideal application tool: a non-absorbent rounded edge spatula that does not leave fragments or lint, allowing a precise and cost-effective application.

The ideal applicators are not absorbent, however they must necessarily be accurate, disposable, safe, and inexpensive. The authors of this paper therefore suggest that the common coffee stirrer (with a rounded edge tip) has the potential to become the perfect application tool for imiquimod (Figure 1). ●

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