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Decyl-Glucoside; this eco-friendly but skin-unfriendly surfactant:a case report

Sofia Gueroum[1], el Fetoiki Fatima Zahra[1], Hali Fouzia[1], Chiheb Soumiya[1]

[1]University Hospital Center Ibn Rochd - Casablanca, Dermatology and Venerology Department, Casablanca, Morocco

Introduction & Objectives:

Alkyl glucosides are a family of mild non-ionic surfactants which are increasingly used in a wide range of cosmetics, household products and wound dressings. Contact allergy to alkyl glucosides may be more common than previously thought, particularly in atopic patients. We report one case.

Materials & Methods:

Results:

Case report

A 25-year-old female patient with personal and family history of atopy had been presenting with a pruritic facial rash lasting for two months as intermitent episodes, resistant to the usual treatment of her atopic dermatitis (local corticosteroids of moderate class: desonide).

On clinical examination, we found pruritic erythematous papules, involving the malar regions and the eyelids. The diagnosis of contact dermatitis was evoked. The course of action was to make a detailed interrogation and perform a patch test which came back positive for Decyl Glucoside ++. This surfactant was found in the patient's shampoo, introduced 4 months ago. Treatment was based on avoiding Decyl Glucoside containing products with local immunomodulating therapy (tacrolimus) wich showed good results.

Conclusion:

The use of decyl glucoside is becoming increasingly common with the emergence of the "Green" label. The cosmetics industry is rediscovering this eco-friendly alkyl glucoside, synthesized from natural, renewable sources and considered a mild surfactant, but it shouldn't escape suspicion during an allergological investigation into contact dermatitis.