

Emollient Formulary Quick Reference Guide

The table below outlines emollient choices from the North of Tyne emollient formulary. Products are arranged in approximate order of greasiness (from least to most). Preferred and most cost-effective choices are highlighted.

Preparation	Ingredients	Pack size(s) and cost
E45[®] cream	Light liquid paraffin 12.6%, white soft paraffin 14.5%, hypoallergenic anhydrous wool fat (hypoallergenic lanolin) 1% in self-emulsifying monostearin	50g = £1.61 125g = £2.90 350g = £4.85 500g pump = £5.62
Zerocream[®]	Liquid paraffin 12.6%, white soft paraffin 14.5%	50g = £1.17 500g pump = £4.08
Aveeno[®] cream <i>ACBS – for endogenous and exogenous eczema, xeroderma, ichthyosis, and senile pruritis associated with dry skin</i>	Colloidal oatmeal in emollient basis	100ml = £3.97 300ml pump = £6.80
Aqueous cream <i>Use only as a soap substitute</i>	Emulsifying ointment 30%, phenoxyethanol 1%, water	30g = £0.65 100g = £1.12 500g = £5.60
ZeroAQS[®]	Macrogol cetostearyl ether 1.8%, liquid paraffin 6%, white soft paraffin 15%	500g = £3.29
Doublebase[®] gel	Liquid paraffin 15%, isopropyl myristate 15%	100g = £2.65 500g = £5.83
Hydrous ointment BP (oily cream)	Dried magnesium sulfate 0.5%, phenoxyethanol 1%, wool alcohols ointment 50%, in freshly boiled and cooled purified water	500g = £4.65
Cetraben[®]	White soft paraffin 13.2%, light liquid paraffin 10.5%	50g pump = £1.40 150g pump = £3.98 500g pump = £5.99 1.05kg pump = £11.62
Diprobase[®] cream	Cetomacrogol 2.25%, cetostearyl alcohol 7.2%, liquid paraffin 6%, white soft paraffin 15%	50g = £1.28 500g pump = £6.32
Zerobase[®] cream	Liquid paraffin 11%	500g pump = £5.26
Hydromol[®] ointment <i>Same formula as Epaderm ointment but lower cost and less additives. NB Hydromol cream is non-formulary.</i>	Yellow soft paraffin 30%, emulsifying wax 30%, liquid paraffin 40%	125g = £2.84 500g = £4.82 1kg = £8.96
Emulsifying ointment BP <i>First line ointment choice</i>	Emulsifying wax 30%, white soft paraffin 50%, liquid paraffin 20%	500g = £2.56
White soft paraffin	White petroleum jelly	100g = £0.50
Yellow soft paraffin	Yellow petroleum jelly	100g = £0.45
Paraffin liquid sterile		

Antiseptic containing emollients – specialist initiation only – NOT for routine use		
Dermol® cream	Benzalkonium chloride 0.1%, chlorhexidine hydrochloride 0.1%, isopropyl myristate 10%, liquid paraffin 10%	100g = £2.86 500g pump = £6.63
Urea containing emollients		
Calmurid® cream	Urea 10%, lactic acid 5%	100g = £8.83 500g pump = £34.00
Emollient bath additives		
Oilatum® emollient bath additive <i>Avoid all OTC product descriptions e.g. 'Junior'</i>	Light liquid paraffin 63.4%	250ml = £2.75 500ml = £4.57
Zerolatum® bath additive	Liquid paraffin 65%, acetylated wool alcohols 5%	500ml = £4.79
Zeroneum® bath additive	Refined soya bean oil 83.35%	500ml = £4.48
Antiseptic containing emollient bath additives – specialist initiation only – NOT for routine use		
Dermol 600® bath emollient	Benzalkonium chloride 0.5%, liquid paraffin 25%, isopropyl myristate 25%	600ml = £7.55

The North of Tyne (NoT) emollient formulary provides a choice of emollients to meet the needs of the vast majority of patients, and promote cost effective prescribing. The NoT emollient formulary has been adopted for use in Gateshead as dermatology services are currently commissioned from Newcastle.

Choice of emollient depends on the individual, remembering that products acceptable to one patient may be unacceptable to another.

General principles for prescribing emollients:

- ✓ Prescribe by brand to aid identification and prevent dispensing errors.
- ✓ Suitable quantities – **250g per week for children** and **500 – 600g per week for adults**.
- ✓ Patients should use the cheapest emollient that is effective, cosmetically acceptable and which they are prepared to use regularly.
- ✓ Start with small packs until patient finds a suitable product.
- ✓ Prescribe pump dispensers where possible.
- ✓ There is little evidence to support the routine use of bath emollients. Bath and shower emollients offer no advantages over emollients and they should not be used in place of products which are directly applied to the skin after washing.
- ✓ Repeat prescriptions for emollients should be reviewed on a regular basis.
- ✓ Ointments can cause folliculitis due to occlusive effect – stop and switch to a cream.
- ✓ Paraffin containing products are highly flammable and bath products may cause a slip hazard.

References

1. [North of Tyne Area Prescribing Committee Formulary Version 4.5 July 2013](#)
2. [British National Formulary August 2013](#)