

Topical Therapies: How Ingredients Impact Skin Health



Topical therapies can be a valuable tool for veterinarians to support the maintenance of clean, healthy skin as well as provide cleansing and therapeutic effects for pets with skin disease. Topical therapy offers direct access to diseased tissue, and using it in conjunction with systemic therapy may allow you to reduce the length of systemic therapy required.

Factors to consider when selecting a topical product:

- Current patient skin condition and diagnosis
- Location and extent of infection (if present)
- Product active ingredients, vehicles and delivery systems
- Patient and client compliance

Properties of Common Topical Ingredients

| | Sulfur | Salicylic Acid | Benzoyl Peroxide | Chlorhexidine, Chloroxylenol | Miconazole Nitrate, Ketoconazole, Clotrimazole | Pramoxine Hydrochloride |
|---------------------|--------|----------------|------------------|------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Antibacterial | ● | | ● | ● | | |
| Antifungal | ● | | | ● | ● | |
| Antipruritic | | | | | | ● |
| Antiseborrheic | ● | ● | ● | | | |
| Astringent | | | ● | | | |
| Degreasing | | | ● | | | |
| Follicular Flushing | | | ● | | | |

Topical Advancements

Use of topical therapies has been rising due to the development of new active ingredients, better delivery systems and concerns about the increasing incidence of resistant infections.

Delivery systems include:

- Shampoos
- Rinses
- Powders
- Lotions
- Wipes
- Sprays
- Emulsions
- Ointments
- Gels
- Mousses

Topical formulations also contain ingredients that act as a vehicle for delivering the active agents. Vehicle ingredients can impact the product's efficacy in ways such as adjusting the pH, prolonging the effects of the active agents or promoting delivery of the active agents to the skin surface or stratum corneum.

Improving Outcomes through Compliance

Most topical products require repeated use to reach their full potential. Before making a recommendation, it's important to discuss with your client whether they will be able to bathe their pet with the frequency you recommend. If not, you may want to consider a product that has longer-lasting effects. For those clients who are able to bathe their pets regularly, suggest using a timer to ensure they're allowing the product enough contact time on the pet's skin for maximum effect.



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