

Letters to the Editor

Patch testing with budesonide

Dear Sir

We read with interest the report of Isaksson et al. (1) but are not convinced that they can draw the conclusion that low concentrations of budesonide are more sensitive than higher concentrations when patch testing. From the information they present, it is not possible to determine whether the effect they see is due to a concentration or vehicle-related phenomenon, as they tested at higher concentration (0.1%) in pet. and at lower concentration (0.02% and below) in ethanol. They (2) and others (3, 4) have shown that alcoholic vehicles are more sensitive when patch testing with corticosteroids. The same studies (3, 4) have also shown the strength of the reaction, with the same vehicle, to be dose-dependent, with stronger reactions at higher concentration. Furthermore, it is clear from Table 2 of their own report (1) that 0.02% in ethanol detected more sensitized individuals than 0.002% in ethanol, which similarly detected more than 0.0002% in ethanol.

We believe, on the basis of the available published evidence, that corticosteroids should be tested at 1% in ethanol. However, further studies are needed to increase the sensitivity of current patch test methods, as false-negative patch test reactions are relatively common (5).

Yours sincerely

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References

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