

Short Communications

Sensitivity to salicylic acid

EDWARD RUDZKI AND ANNA KOSLOWSKA

Department of Dermatology, Warsaw Medical School, Warsaw, Poland

Since wool alcohols are not always available in our Clinic, eucerine with 5 % salicylic acid is sometimes included in the Standard Series of patch tests. For control purposes, yellow soft paraffin is used with 5 % salicylic acid, and some positive reactions are obtained with it. Five such cases are described below.

1. A man aged 35 years reported with a dermatitis above the waist and involving the face, of six months duration. For twelve years he had been employed in concrete-laying and for the last four months he had worked naked to the waist. He was positive to chromium and to salicylic acid. He mentioned that for several months he had been using salicylic spirit after shaving. After the onset of dermatitis he noticed that salicylic spirit caused redness and burning, but he continued to apply it in order 'to burn out' the dermatitis.

2. A woman aged 47 years had a stasis dermatitis with two attacks of a secondary nature spread over four years. She was positive to p-phenylenediamine, balsam of Peru, chloramphenicol and salicylic acid. She was in the habit of cleaning her face and hands from time to time with salicylic spirit. She noticed that it 'irritated' the skin, but she considered this as 'healthy'.

3. A man aged 54, a white collar worker, was affected for eight years by a hand dermatitis with a short episode of dorsal foot involvement. He smokes and carries matches in his pocket. He was positive to benzocaine, chromium and salicylic acid. For many years he had used salicylic spirit for occasional minor skin le-

sions (? herpes and folliculitis). He had not noticed any reactions after the application of salicylic spirit.

4. A man aged 51, suffering for 35 years from psoriasis, had not been treated for the last nine years, although at the time of examination he exhibited psoriasis inveterata on both elbows. He was tested because of changes which had appeared a month earlier and had been diagnosed by a general practitioner as eczema, but which had not been seen by a dermatologist. He was only positive to salicylic acid. He recalled that in the last period of treatment for psoriasis there occurred redness and itching after every application of 5 % unguentum salicylicum.

5. A man aged 42 suffered from the age of six months from atopic dermatitis with a typically severe course frequently involving the face. He was positive to salicylic acid, lanolin (without salicylic acid), parabens, neomycin and tetracycline. He was intolerant of a number of topically applied drugs including all Polish medicaments containing parabens. For many years he had used salicylic spirit after shaving, but he had ceased to do so because he noticed that it caused redness and itching.

Thus, in all five patients positive to salicylic acid, contact with this substance was demonstrated. In four cases the source of salicylic acid was 2 % salicylic acid in spirit, and three patients noticed that the use of this preparation caused reactions. All the patients took aspirin, but none of them found it to cause exacerbations or relapses of dermatitis.

This document is a scanned copy of a printed document. No warranty is given about the accuracy of the copy. Users should refer to the original published version of the material.