

Emollients

Dr George Moncrieff, GPSI in dermatology, presents his personal recommendations on emollient choices for eczema and psoriasis

Key

● Avoid completely

● Recommended

● Not recommended

SLS

Sodium lauryl sulfate. Damaging to skin barrier

Humectant

Substance that prevents water loss

TEWL

Trans-epidermal water loss

Simple emollients (creams and gels)

Name	Price/500g	Delivery	Comments
● AproDerm	£4.95	Pump	Licensed from birth
● AproDerm	£3.99	Pump	Licensed from birth. Contains glycerol – an excellent humectant
● Aquamax	£3.99	Tub	Avoid as comes in a tub
● Aquamol	£6.40	Pump	Contains chlorocresol, which some patients complain can smell ‘chemical’
● Cetraben	£5.99	Pump	Contains glycerol – an excellent humectant
● Diprobase	£6.32	Pump	Contains chlorocresol, which some patients complain can smell ‘chemical’
● Doublebase gel	£5.83	Pump	Contains glycerol as a humectant. Minimal wastage
● E45	£5.99	Pump	
● Enopen	£5.99	Pump	Described as mimicking Cetraben (same price)
● Epaderm	£7.01	Pump	Contains chlorocresol, which some patients complain can smell ‘chemical’
● Epimax	£2.49	Squeeze bottle	Adequate only as an inexpensive soap substitute (‘similar’ to Diprobase). Significant wastage in tube
● ExCetra	£2.95	Squeeze bottle	Same as Enopen
● ExmaQS	£2.95	Tub	Marginally different formulation of paraffins from Enopen, but costs more. Avoid as comes in a tub
● Exmabase	£2.85	Pump	Weak pump system with high wastage
● Exmaben	£4.25	Pump	Same as Enopen. Weak pump system with high wastage
● Exmalatum	£4.45	Pump	Same as ExmaQS
● ExoCream	£3.99	Pump	
● Hypobase	£5.83	Pump	Weak pump system with high wastage
● Isomol	£2.92	Squeeze bottle	Described as mimicking Doublebase gel, but performs differently and is in a squeeze bottle, greater wastage
● KreaMol A	£2.79	Tub	Avoid as in a jar
● Lipobase (50g)	£14.60	Tube	Expensive. Only available as 50g tubes (£1.46/50g)
● Myribase	£4.66	Pump	Weak pump system with high wastage
● QV	£5.96	Pump	
● Soffen	£4.79	Tub	Very similar to Enopen cream
● Unguentum M	£8.48	Tub	Not recommended as there less expensive alternatives and it’s in a tub
● ZeroAQS	£3.29	Tub	Mimics aqueous cream (no SLS). Not recommended as comes in a tub. Contains chlorocresol, which can smell ‘chemical’
● Zerobase	£5.26	Pump	Described as mimicking Diprobase cream (less white soft paraffin). Also contains chlorocresol, which can smell ‘chemical’
● Zerocream	£4.08	Pump	Described as mimicking E45
● Zerodouble gel	£4.90	Pump	Described as mimicking Doublebase gel (glycerin rather than glycerol), but different formulation
● Zeroguent	£6.99	Pump	Described as mimicking Unguentum M

Simple emollients (ointments)

These all come in tubs, as they are too thick to be dispensed via a pump, so care must be taken to prevent contamination – see cautions

Name	Price/500g	Comments
● AproDerm	£3.95	
● Cetraben	£5.99	Comes in 125g and 450g tubs (£5.39 per 450g)
● Diprobase	£5.99	
● Emelpin	£3.97	
● EmulsifEss	£3.97	Contains 3% SLS, which is irritant, even to normal skin

Name	Price/500g	Comments
● Epaderm	£6.58	Identical constituents to Hydromol, but slightly softer and more expensive. Water miscible
● Epimax	£2.99	
● Fifty:50	£3.66	Price varies frequently – often a lot more expensive
● Hydromol	£4.96	Identical constituents to Epaderm. Water miscible. Less expensive than Epaderm
● KreaMoint 50:50	£3.17	Same as Fifty:50
● QV intensive	£5.75	
● Thirty:30	£6.47	
● Zeroderam	£4.10	Described as similar to Hydromol/Epaderm (white, not yellow, soft paraffin)

- Caution
- All these products contain paraffin and are therefore naturally flammable. Avoid naked flames

● Patients should be advised not to extract with fingers as this will rapidly contaminate ointment (ideally use a clean spoon or disposable spatula)

Sophisticated emollients

5% urea-containing emollients

Name	Price/500g	Delivery	Other significant ingredients	Comments
● Balneum	£9.97	Pump	5% urea & ceramide 0.1%	Currently only ceramide-containing emollient on NHS tariff. Prevents TEWL for 24 hours
● Imuderm	£6.62	Pump	5% glycerine	Pump has weak spring – refills slowly. Not a substitute for Balneum as no ceramide

10% urea-containing emollients

● Aquadrate (100g)	£22.00	Tube		Expensive. Only available as 100g tubes (£4.37/100g)
● Calmurid	£33.40	Pump	Lactic acid 5%	Very expensive
● Eucerin cream intensive (100ml)	£37.95	Tube		Very expensive. Only available as 100ml tubes (£7.59/100ml)
● Eucerin lotion intensive (250ml)	£39.65	Tube		Very expensive. Only available as 100ml tubes (£7.59/100ml)
● Flexitol 10%	£11.77	Pump		
● Flexitol 25%	£14.75	Pump		
● Hydromol	£22.05	Tube		Expensive. Only available as 30g and 100g tubes (£4.41/100g)
● Nutraplus (100g)	£21.85	Tube		Expensive. Only available as 100g tubes (£4.37/100g)

Emollients with additional properties (e.g. natural moisturising factors, ceramides, colloidal oatmeal or povidone)

● Adex gel	£5.99	Pump	Nicotinamide and glycerol	Anti-itch and anti-inflammatory properties
● Aproderm colloidal (500ml)	£5.80	Pump	Colloidal oatmeal	Competitively priced colloidal emollient. Efficient pump (>2% wastage). Paraffin free
● Aveeno (500ml)	£6.47	Pump	Colloidal oatmeal	Evidence for anti-inflammatory properties. Pump leaves >25% wastage
● CeraVe cream (177ml / 454g)	Not on NHS tariff yet	Tub, tube	Three essential ceramides 7.5% Glycerine and hyaluronic acid	Interesting multivesicular technology. Reinforces skin barrier with powerful hemectant (£9.00/177ml or £16.00/454g)
● CeraVe lotion (236ml / 473ml)	Not on NHS tariff yet	Pump	Three essential ceramides 6% Glycerine and hyaluronic acid	Interesting multivesicular technology. Reinforces skin barrier with powerful hemectant (£9.50/236ml or £15.00/473ml)
● Cuderm	Not NHS	Pump	Colloidal oatmeal	Not on NHS tariff yet
● Doublebase Dayleve	£6.29	Pump	Povidone & glycerol	Prevents TEWL for around 12 hours and contains additional glycerol. Minimal wastage
● Epimax colloidal	£2.99	Tube	Alcohol preservative	High alcohol content, which stings
● Hydromol	£12.12	Pump	Sodium pyrrolidore carboxylate 2.5% – a natural moisturising factor	Sodium pyrrolidine carboxylate (NMF). Expensive
● Lipikar AP+ Baume (200ml / 400ml)	Not on NHS tariff yet	Tube, pump	4% niacinamide, 20% shea butter, 7% glycerine, 0.2% Aqua Posae Filiformis	Supports skin microbiome balance. Suitable from birth. (£13.00/200ml or £20.00/400ml)
● Oilatum	£5.28	Pump	Povidone	Prevents TEWL for around 12 hours
● Ultraveen (125ml)	£13.56	Tube	Colloidal oatmeal	Very expensive
● Zeroveen	£5.89	Pump	Colloidal oatmeal	