

Physician Clinical Experiences with Strontium

31 October, 2006

Gary S. Hahn, M.D.

The following reports were received from United States physicians, most of whom are Dermatologists, who posted their clinical experiences with strontium anti-itch products and product prototypes on a dermatologist internet discussion group, “Rx Derm”. These reports are not part of well-controlled clinical trials and therefore should be viewed as only the personal experience of the reporting physician or patient and not as proof that strontium is efficacious for the reported condition.

This discussion group has approximately 1000 physician members, most of whom are dermatologists, and it is run by Arthur Huntley, M.D. Professor of Dermatology at the University of California, Davis, School of Medicine.

Shingles Patient

Report from a Professor of Dermatology at a University of California School of Medicine of his clinical experience using a strontium anti-itch spray and hydrogel on a patient with Shingles

Subject: Re: FW: strontium results

Date: Tue, 22 Feb 2000 12:43:27 (PST)

Just thought I would share the comments from a patient with severe pruritus associated with zoster.

“Thanks so much for the anti-itch “potion”—it got me through the wedding without looking like I had St. Vitus’ Dance. In case your friend wants any feedback on it, for me, it acted something like this: Touching the area to apply anything was exquisitely painful—kind of like stinging nettles, if you’ve ever been hiking and got them on you. In addition to the touch the first application on the shingles started to burn at an escalating rate (kind of like taking a hot pepper in your mouth, thinking it’s going to be ok, and then it starts building in intensity and starts to scare you)—just at the uh-

oh-very-warm stage it stopped warming and turned cool! Then there was a measure of numbness, which was such a relief from the shingles pain that it gave me shivers at first. By late Friday night and the 3rd application I was beginning to feel like a junky waiting for the needle! By Saturday night even the pain of application was considerably eased, and I could put clothes on for first time without agony. Now the hive-like swelling has gone down and the whole area has shrunk and is beginning to dry up into the pox-like patches. The itching is more like tingling, and is mostly quite bearable. The pain all over the back is much less, although the deep pain and burning down my arms and back is not yet gone. Today is my last day of acyclovir (and my G-I tract says thanks for that fact), but I think the scourge is generally on the run (no pun intended....) Also, for your information, I found the gel much easier to use and control than the liquid, and much less wasteful, especially since the shingles are at an awkward spot on my back. Again, thank you both so much for my relief and management!"

Subject: Re: FW: strontium results

Date: Tue, 22 Feb 2000 17:10: 18 (PST)

Dear Professor_____:

Many thanks for the enclosed report from your patient treated with one of the strontium nitrate formulations. From their report, it seems quite promising. Given the placebo effect, etc., what is your opinion of how well it worked?

Subject: Re: FW: strontium results

Date: Tue, 22 Feb 2000 18:05:42 (PST)

Gary

There is no chance of a placebo effect with this patient. She had been through lots of other stuff. I told her that I did not know if it would work but that it might.

I can also share the fact that I occasionally have intense itching from too much time in a chlorinated pool (I swim 1-2 miles/day). I waited to try the strontium until the itching was

intense. Almost instant relief, and I didn't wake up at night because of pruritus as I do when I have so much itching. The curious thing to me is that the next evening I did not experience pruritus and I should have. Must be a longer effect than I imagined.

(Signed) Professor of Dermatology

Shingles Patient

Friday, April 26, 2002

Telephone conversation with a Shingles patient discussing his experience using Cosmederm anti-itch products: Spray (6% strontium), Hydrogel (4% strontium) and Lotion (2% strontium)

Conversation Participants: Patient (Shingles patient), Dr. H. and office staff.

Dr. H: You're on speaker phone and I'm tape recording this conversation as I previously discussed with you so I can get your report accurately, and I will transcribe this conversation for my records and to share with others.

PATIENT: Well, great.

Dr. H: Could you review your current experience with Shingles and the strontium anti-itch products?

PATIENT: I'm excited about the results. I wish I could be excited about the shingles, but they're quite painful, and I'll recount a little bit about the progress of this. On the 14th of this month, I noticed some itching and discomfort in my leg and didn't think much of it. Then about two days later, there was raised redness, and there were blotches spreading down the leg, actually toward the groin, around and on the buttocks and up to the center of my back, actually toward my spine, right around belt level. The blotches were very uncomfortable, and about a day later, I noticed blistering. Friday of that week, I was going to go to a dermatologist, but some things happened at work, and I couldn't get out of work, and this was becoming very painful; painful not only on the outside with burning, but painful even in the joints. I went to the ER Sunday and was prescribed some Valtrex, and I was prescribed some Vicodin, so I started taking Vicodin and the

Valtrex Sunday, and Sunday I finally realized that, not only did it hurt, but it was itching. So I tried the Cosmederm anti-itch hydrogel.

I put the hydrogel on extremely thick, and not only did it take away the itching, but it seemed to soothe the pain. I continued to use it and I happened to have some samples from Dr. H., and I tried the lotion, and that seemed to work, too. I really didn't pay much attention to which lasted longer or whatever, but I know that if I kept the stuff on my legs, then the pain was gone, and the itching was gone.

Dr. H: When you say gone was it really completely gone or partially gone?

PATIENT: It was completely gone. I actually felt nothing for three to five hours. At that point, I applied more, and it seemed like about every five hours, if I applied either the gel or the lotion, the itching was gone, and the exterior pain was gone. I still felt some stuff like soreness in the joints. After using this within a day, the redness started to subside, and the raised part started going down; I still had the blisters. I have continued using this since Sunday and, this morning when I looked at the spots or the blisters, actually they're all kind of brownish-black, and they're resolving, and I woke up , and it was itching, and I put the lotion on, and basically it took the itch away, and right now as we speak, the itching it still totally gone.

Dr. H: And after you put the lotion on or any of the products, how long did it take for the itching, or the burning to subside?

PATIENT: Actually, it took no more than a minute. It was soothing; the coolness of the lotion seemed to sooth it right away and, within a minute. I mean almost immediately, within a minute at the most, all the itching was gone. The pain would leave within about two minutes.

Dr. H: How severe was the burning or the itching? I know it's kind of hard to judge that.

PATIENT: Terrible. That's all I can describe it as. It's like, I knew that I didn't want to scratch open the blisters, and it would take a white-knuckle experience, clenching my hands to keep myself from scratching, and after applying the lotion or the gel, I mean like I say there was no need to worry about trying to scratch it, because it was like it was not there.

Dr. H: And when you put any of those products on, did you feel anything at all, any stinging or burning or discomfort?

PATIENT: No, I experienced no stinging or burning whatsoever. I've also used this product (lotion and spray) on sunburn pain, and it soothes the sunburn within a couple of minutes. I'd say one to two maximum. It soothes any itching or stinging from sunburn, too.

Dr. H: How many times would you guess over the last year or however long you've been using it, that you've had this sunburn experience?

PATIENT: Oh, about three or four times.

Dr. H: Any effect on the sunburn redness that you've seen?

PATIENT: I really didn't look for effect on the redness, because I really. I mean that's not something that bothers me. It's the pain that I don't like to deal with.

Dr. H: And how long would the sunburn pain reduction last?

PATIENT: Three to four hours.

Dr. H: I'm sure you've had sunburns before and used other products to reduce sunburn pain. How would you compare the Cosmederm product to any product you've used in the past for sunburn pain?

PATIENT: It seems to last longer and it works as well or better than any other product that I've used, but it does seem to last twice or three times as long.

Dr. H: And have you used it for itching in the past from other causes like poison oak or insect bites or anything like that?

PATIENT: I have used it for insect bites and poison ivy. I have friends who used it for poison oak, but I have used it for poison ivy, and again it does take the swelling down, the raised redness, and it takes the itch away.

Dr. H: In terms of the length of time that the effect lasts and the rapidity of its onset of action, it is similar to what you've described with the Shingles?

PATIENT: Yes. I found that it seems to last. I mean, when I can I put it on the in the morning, at lunchtime, and then when I come home for dinner, come home from work,

and then after my shower at the end of the day. It seems to last, and I've experienced this with every time I've used it for any type of itch.

Dr. H: Thanks for being willing to recount your experience.

PATIENT: You're welcome.

Subject: Re: Prurigo from Hell / Cosmederm availability
Date: Tue, 10 Sep 2002 19:53:08 -0500
From Dermatologist in La Crosse, WI

Cosmederm anti-itch products are available over the counter, but not over many counters in my area and so I have a few local pharmacies stock them. If your practice is into dispensing, I would suggest selling it yourself. I like to keep a trade size sample of level 1, 2 and 3 in each exam room. It is fun to apply the level I to the left side, Level 2 to the right side and then ask the pruritic patient if there has been any improvement after two or three minutes. Most of the time they notice improvement and they are very grateful.

Subject: Re: Skunk cabbage dermatitis
Date: Wed, 15 May 2002

Do you think that strontium might help (Cosmederm-7) No Financial Interest.

Subject: contact stinging from Skunk cabbage
Date: Wed, 15 May 2002

I've had good results with dr.hahn's strontium for itching ... it may work for stinging ... if not, one of the topical 'caines ...

Subject: strontium
Date: Sat, 02 Mar 2002 11:30:39 -0800

i have a patient with severe urticaria now responding to doxepin 10 mg bid who complained bitterly of itching .. i had her order gary hahn's strontium creams and solution (for the scalp) and she said it helped a lot ... nfi

Subject: drug eruption from Interferon

Date: Mon, 21 Jan 2002 20:39:04 EST

I have a female patient who is on Interferon and Ribavirin for Hep C. Eight weeks into the treatment, she has a morbilliform eruption, mainly on the trunk. Somewhat pruritic. She has already tried Zyrtec, Claritin, Atarax, and Benadryl with disappointing results, as far as controlling the itch and rash. She doesn't want to stop the Interferon, and I can't blame her. No other drugs. Any ideas? Should we just pile on the antihistamines? Does anyone think that the fact that she has this eruption is a positive sign that her immune system is being activated?

Thanks,

Subject: Re: drug eruption from Interferon

Date: Mon, 21 Jan 2002 21:04:10 EST

I have no answer to the therapy, but it has been reported that "more than 10 percent of pruritus from ribavirin occurs after receiving combination therapy with interferon." (Reference on request.)

Perhaps it's not the interferon; rather the ribavirin that's the culprit, not that this information helps with the management.

Respectfully,

Subject: Re: drug eruption from Interferon

Date: Mon, 21 Jan 2002 21:38:03 -0500

My patient on interferon for Hep C developed a lichenoid eruption on the upper trunk. The itch was what bothered her. Cosmederm helped her immensely (strontium cl).

- > Jo, how do you have your pts get the cosmederm? Do you have a local
- > pharmacy that carries it? Do you refer them to a web site? Do you purchase
- > the stuff yourself and sell it?

Subject: Re: drug eruption from Interferon

Date: Mon, 21 Jan 2002

Have had decent results in senile pruritus with 3% strontium chloride.

Subject: Re: drug eruption from Interferon

Date: Mon, 21 Jan 2002

I tell them they can buy it from www.cosmederm.com or get it from me.

I keep a few bottles on hand.

Sent: Monday, October 15, 2001 11:23 AM

Subject: RE: brachioradial pruritus/strontium chloride/Cosmederm

I just had a brachioradial pruritus walk in. Years of terrible drives her crazy itch of the left arm (she has areas of digging/crusts) happens every fall...lots of sun in the summer (who knows if that is why?)...

After five minutes of Cosmederm 6% spray...no itch! (except in the area under her short sleeve that I did not pick up to spray under.

We got samples of the lotion, gel and spray 6% from the website or phone...

Try the samples in the office, if it works, then give them the number to buy it, and make sure to have the pamphlets explaining its unique action...the company will send you a pile.

Sent: Mon, 15 Oct 2001 22:54:27 -0500

Subject: Re: brachioradial prurigo / brachioradial pruritus

Speaking of Cosmederm, I had two patients in a row this afternoon who were both 60 year old ladies with an airborne contact dermatitis in upper chest, abdomen, back, but sparing the breasts and both had severe itching for several weeks and both improved 90% within three minutes of the application of the Cosmederm anti itch 4% hydrogel or the 6% spray. I really love that stuff. Thanks, Gary Hahn. No financial interest.

Sent: Wednesday, October 03, 2001 9:04 PM

Subject: Dermlite mites / Ivermectin failure/ scabies / Cosmederm kudos

BTW, I must once again sing the praises of Cosmederm Anti-Itch lotion, hydrogel and spray (2%, 4% and 6% strontium respectively. www.Cosmederm.com). In both of these itching scabies patients I applied some Cosmederm in the office and within a minute they were itch free. I enjoy giving patients immediate relief of their symptoms. Imagine how you would feel if you had been itching day and night for months and then a doctor makes the correct diagnosis and immediately relieves your incessant itching. Make sure you keep some of the Cosmederm products in each one of your exam rooms so you can be a miracle healer. It makes you feel like you actually know what you are doing.

Sent: Sat, 29 Sep 2001 10:22:12 AM MDT

Subject: Re: recalcitrant pruritus/carpal tunnel repair/strontium chloride

Patient came in this week to drop by and report that her Cosmederm Spray sample (strontium chloride) has totally taken care of her right arm pruritus (it was driving her crazy, even waking her up at night). She had no excoriations any more after two weeks of strontium chloride topical.

I have samples, which are full size, and I put a little in a sterile urine container for them to take home and then they order more. I give them the pamphlets that came with my full size samples, as they explain the unique way that it works which is very impressive to both my patients and me. I circle that part. When I start running out of samples I ask them to tell the company when they call, and then they send me more!

Subject: Strontium chloride

Date: Mon, 11 Sep 2000 01:07:38 EDT

I hope I haven't already reported this patient to you (I'm having one of those déjà vu days!) My 75 year old patient with very itchy Grover's disease reports that the Cosmederm has worked better than anything he has tried (including clobetasol, dermazine, pramoxine, saran, various

topical corticosteroids, gold bond powder, lubricants both cream and lotions, aveeno anti-itch lotion, metrogel).

He uses it twice daily sparingly. He considers himself to be at this point 100% improved. The relief was immediate upon use. He occasionally will feel itchy if he inadvertently rubs clothing too hard across himself or turns excessively in his sleep. He had no complications.

Many thanks.

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Subject: Re: radiobrachial pruritus / brachioradial pruritus / Cosmederm / strontium

Date: Mon, 10 Sep 2001 21:16:00 -0500

I also have had good luck with the Cosmederm anti-itch line. The nice thing about the Cosmederm is that it can be applied right in your office and in three minutes you can see if it works. I keep all three forms in each exam room. It is so nice to be able to lay on my "magic hand" (with Cosmederm in my palm) and then massage it into the patient's itchy skin. I sometimes find stinging or burning with the level 3 (spray) and even with the level 2 (hydrogel). The level 1 is always well tolerated but it is only 2% strontium. The only problem is duration. Sometimes it leads to improvement for hours and at other times it may only last for 20 minutes. ...[It] is important that you demonstrate efficacy in the office. You should either be able to dispense it yourself or have a nearby pharmacy or two stocking it. ...

Last Friday afternoon was my Cosmederm afternoon. I had five or six pruritic patients in the afternoon that I referred to our clinic pharmacy for Cosmederm. They were literally standing in line to purchase the stuff and the pharmacy temporarily ran out of the Level 1 lotion.

It was particularly gratifying to see it turn off the severe itching associated with acute spongiotic poison ivy dermatitis. I also had success with an 88 year old dialysis patient with severe pruritus. He was almost suicidal because of the severe, intractable pruritus. He was literally tearing up his fragile skin. I got him on the Cosmederm and that made a huge difference. I also got him to visit his local tanning booth (he lived 40 miles from my clinic so I couldn't use my box). After a year of hell, he was able to finally sleep at night. I was very happy to discharge him.

Sent: 08/29/2001 05:41:48 PM

Subject: Re: vaginal itching/ Cosmederm / Gary Hahn/ prurit

I have had two or three patients in the last year with the vulvo/gingival LP who have done slightly better with topical Cosmederm level 1 anti itch lotion. It contains 2% strontium. I also use 2% viscous lidocaine and in severe cases 5% lidocaine. I know your patient doesn't have LP, but the Cosmederm may still be worth a try. If there is a lot of itching without much to see and if the recommendations of others doesn't help and if the Cosmederm doesn't help then push on with anti-depressants.

I like to keep all three of the Cosmederm products (the 2% lotion, 4% hydrogel and 6% anti-itch spray) in each exam room so that I can do immediate testing and demonstrating. This is particularly important when you are dealing with the vulva or perianal areas. Patients don't appreciate waiting months for an appointment only to get a \$75 dollar office bill and a \$50 prescription and then the first application leaves them squirming in pain. Better to have them squirm in your exam room. I find the 2% lotion is the most gentle and the least likely to sting.

I had a 55 year old female patient today in follow up with one of the worst cases of neurotic excoriations that I have seen in some time. When I first saw her two months she had excoriations with scarring on the arms shoulders, upper and mid back with plenty of old and new lesions. I upped her Prozac (that she had been on for years) from 20 to 40 mg a day, I talked to her about the touch deficiency syndrome, I added tetracycline for its anti-inflammatory effect and to treat some scalp folliculitis and I also started her on Cosmederm 6% anti-itch spray.

She is now about 80% better. She found the Cosmederm quite helpful and she only went through 60 ml in two months.

I also got feedback today on the worst pruritus ani/LSC of the perianal area that I have ever taken care of. This man has had lichenified hypertrophic LSC in his gluteal cleft and extending into the perineum area for over 30 years. No bowel problems. I treated him with everything including antibiotics, antifungals. intralesional, topical and short bursts of systemic steroids, Elimite Stromectol (Ivermectin) Castellani's triple paste, lidocaine, cryosurgery, and I even attacked him with the CO2 laser to debulk the LSC. All of these helped, but the best treatment over the years was a little 2% lidocaine and frequent applications of 1/4 vinegar/water compresses. He developed allergies to Castellanis, Vytone, balsam of Peru, and iodine.

Recently I started him on 2% Cosmederm antiitch lotion (Level 1) and my nurse called him today for a progress report. He said it is the best product he has ever used (and he has used

EVERYTHING) and he now only needs it once every couple of days. It is particularly helpful for that severe perianal formicating itch that makes his fingernails grow faster and dig deeper.

I have my clinic pharamacy stock it. I also give out cards with all the concentrations and the Cosmederm web site. If I was a dispensing derm I would sell it out of the office. It is not good for everything, but not uncommonly you can hit a grand slam with it and that is always exciting.

Sent: Tue, 14 Aug 2001 12:15:08 -0400

I have about 100 mosquito bites all over my legs and arms and I've had to resort to ice and calamine lotion. I haven't slept well for the last two nights. It's weird...I go to sleep fine and then around 4 to 5 a.m., my bites really start to itch--it wakes me up and it takes all the willpower I have to not scratch the bites.

I tried everything last night, aloe with lidocaine, calamine lotion, but I felt the itchiness build up within minutes after application. Ice was the only thing that worked. Could I use the Cosmederm on my bites? I WILL TRY ANYTHING! **scratch, scratch** Hee, hee...I'm going mad!

Sent: Wed, 15 Aug 2001 10:11:44 -0400

Subject: Ahhhhhhh. I feel much better, thank you!

AHHHH. You're the best! Thank you so very much. I received the packages you sent with the anti-itch products. I had immediate relief when I applied the product to my bites. I applied the anti-aging toner to my legs last night anytime I felt the need, and I was able to sleep well. No itching. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Sent: Fri, 8 Jun 2001 15:15:30 -0700

Subject: strontium chloride/e nodosum

My nurse who has e nodosum has itching in some of the lesions (yes and pain as well). She just applied strontium chloride lotion to one leg, and not to the other, and.... no itch where applied!

Sent: Mon, 4 Jun 2001 11:07:51 -0700
Subject: strontium chloride/pruritus

This post is to encourage those of you who have patients with itch to send for samples from Cosmederm, tel: 858-550-7070, <http://www.Cosmederm.com>, for their strontium chloride lotion/gel/spray.

Strontium chloride blocks type C nociceptors (itch, burn, sting).

Kevin and some others on the list had been compounding this on their own before this product conveniently came out recently.

This past week it almost immediately stopped the itch in a PUVA patient. I will report on an itchy mastocytosis patient when she calls back hopefully today. It has of course stopped localized itch in a variety of patients, including those with itch but no rash.

Sent: 10/05/2000 01:33:52 PM
Subject: Strontium in Chemo & Radiation-induced itching

We have had a half dozen or so reports of thermal burns (usually curling irons) that produced second-degree burns or equivalent, that when treated immediately with either 2% or 4% strontium had almost a complete reduction of burning pain within 5 minutes or so. Interestingly, in every report, there was no blistering, even though the skin was discolored and "should" have blistered. Since neurogenic processes are thought to contribute to burn-induced tissue damage, it would make sense.

Subject: Re: from Dr Lamberg/red scrotum/strontium/"Bodyglide"
Date: Wed, 4 Oct 2000 18:55:53 -0500

For chronic scrotal burning consider topical strontium chloride (ask Gary Hahn for samples of his Cosmederm formulation. . . I have had success with his product on vulvodynia (burning) and moderate success with brachioradial pruritus. I just gave my last sample one hour ago to a 70 year old lady who had Gemzar (new chemotherapy drug) induced radiation recall reaction. Of interest is that the reaction was extremely pruritic on the chest and back instead of painful or burning. It occurred on the chest and back in the port of the radiation therapy that she had

completed three weeks prior to starting the IV Gemzar. I applied the Cosmederm-7 spray, and she noted about a 50% improvement in her itching within 10 minutes.

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Subject: Re: Brachioradial pruritus/gabapentin/strontium
Date: Tue, 29 Aug 2000 22:10:29 -0500

BRP is a classic “rashless itch”. In my difficult cases I have had the best luck with 10% strontium chloride in Vanicream (or better yet Gary Hahn’s 10% or 15% strontium nitrate in a propylene glycol gel...called “Cosmederm-7”).

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Subject: Re: Strontium Samples
Date: Tue, 15 Aug 2000 22:31:19 -0500

I directly applied the 10% hydrogel to an old ladies vulva today. She has been suffering with vulvodinia on and off for years. Amitryptiline helps a little, but it makes her very groggy. Topical lidocaine and aloe vera gel have helped a little. Your product did not sting upon application and after two minutes she had relief. However, there is a big placebo effect when the doctor applies the product in the office. I will call her in two weeks to see if she is suing it and if it works.

I also sent a sample to a 66 year old lady with the rare inverse type of epidermolysis bullosa dystrophica. She has a very sore and very fragile butt with scarring, fissures and woody induration. A tremendous management problem. I started her on Bodyglide (did I mention that in RxDerm..it is a roll on anti-friction treatment to prevent chaffing in athlete’s), and I am hoping for a miracle. I also sent her the Cosmederm lotion, and I am hoping it will help her pain.

—
Subject: Re: Strontium Samples
Date: Thu, 10 Aug 2000 16:03:54 EDT

Q: I just wanted to check to be sure that you received the samples of strontium nitrate lotion, gel and spray that were sent to you about 2 weeks ago. Hopefully it got through customs!

If so, please let me know what you think about the formulations (aesthetics, etc.) and any way in which they could be improved. Of course, I am very interested in hearing about how they work on patients as well.

A: They came through fine.

I gave one pregnant itchy 38 week lady the spray and she was all better in 2 days – hard to say what worked, but she was sure happy.

Presentation Outline of One Clinician's Experience with Strontium Formulations

October 1999

01-08 ITCH, UNCLASSIFIED

I've had some success with random itchy and burning patients using either strontium nitrate or strontium chloride 2.5% - 5% w/w in Vanicream/Cliniderm Cream (it breaks the vehicle system of some other creams, like Moisturel); and also in halobetasol (Ultravate) and mometasone (Elocom) ointment. These are applied bid, and so far have not caused any problems at all, with results ranging from "useless" to "great!!"

Strontium seems to act by quieting down the Type-C nerve fibers in the skin.

Just saw a lady with INTRACTABLE LP – Tried PUVA, Drenison steroid tape, Ultravate, intralesional kenalog, azathioprine, systeminc tretinoin, cyclosporine, chloroquine – her LP was REALLY intractable!

Doing great with mometasone ointment with 5% strontium chloride w/w daily. Very pleased.

Just saw an older man with a many year history of perianal stinging and burning, unresponsive to HC, Betnovate, Anusol, etc.

Doing GREAT on ciclopirox cream (Loprox) with 1% HC powder and 5% strontium chloride w/w bid.
