Chapter 56

Topical Drugs Used in the Treatment of Skin Disorders
Skin

- Forms a barrier between the outside and structures located beneath the skin
- Below the dermis lies the epidermis
- Subject to various types of injury and trauma
Topical Anti-infectives

- Antibiotics
- Antifungals
- Antivirals
Topical Antibiotics

- Examples—bacitracin (Baciguent), gentamicin (G-mylicin), erythromycin (Emgel)
- Use to treat or prevent skin infections
- Treat acne vulgaris
- Bactericidal
- Bacteriostatic
- Superinfections
Bacitracin

- Classification: antibiotic
- Uses: Treat and prevent minor skin infections
- Adverse reactions: Rare; mild and transient itching, burning, stinging and redness
- Patient teaching: Apply BID
Topical Antifungals

- Examples—amphotericin B (Fungizone), miconazole (Micatin), ciclopirox (Loprox)
- Used to treat fungal infections, ie, tinea pedis, tinea corporis
Topical Antivirals

- Examples—acyclovir (Zovirax), penciclovir (Denavir)
Topical Antiseptics and Germicides

- Antiseptic—slows or prevents growth
- Germicide—kills bacteria
- Used to reduce the number of bacteria of skin surfaces
- Examples—benzalkonium (Zephiran), chlorhexidine (Hibiciens)
Antiseptics

- Alcohol
- Chlorhexidine
- Hexachlorophene
- Iodine
- NOT hydrogen peroxide
Adverse Reactions

Few
Skin rash or itching
Topical Corticosteroids

- Examples—amcinonide (Cyclocort), hydrocortisone (Cort-Dome), fluocinolone acetonide (Flurosyn)
- Used on rashes, eczema, insect bites, burns, dermatitis, psoriasis
- Local reactions: irritation, itching, burning, redness, dryness.
- Systemic reactions: More likely if under an occlusive dressing or if applied to a large area.
Corticosteroids

- **Action:** Suppress inflammation. Vehicle in which steroid is dispersed may act as a drying agent or an emollient.
- **Potency:** Varies: read the label!
- **Absorption:** can be absorbed into systemic circulation.
- **Application:** thin film gently rubbed into skin
Corticosteroids

- Contraindications
  - Hypersensitivity, ophthalmic use.
  - Do not use high potency drugs on face, groin, axilla
  - Pregnancy category C
Other Topical Drugs

- Topical antipsoriatics
- Topical enzymes
- Keratolytics
- Topical local anesthetics
Nursing notes

- Apply topical agents to clean, dry skin
- Do not apply occlusive dressings unless ordered by the physician
- Enzymes and antipsoriatics must be applied only to affected area
- Teach patients to wash hands before and after applying creams
- Anti-viral is most effective when use is started when symptoms first appear
- Antivirals do not prevent the spread of infection
Keratolytics

- Action: Removes excess growth of epidermis
- Uses: Warts, calluses, corns, seborrheic keratosis
- Adverse reactions: Few. Transient burning, rash, dry skin, scaling, flu-like symptoms
Keratolytic Agents

- Salicylic acid
- Sulfer
- Masoprocol
Anesthetics: the “Caines”

- Benzocaine
- Dibucaine
- Lidocaine
- And the ugly stepsister: butamben picrate
Topical Anesthetics

- Apply to skin or mucus membrane
- Inhibit conduction of impulses from sensory nerve fibers.
- Use to relieve itching and pain due to skin conditions: poison oak, insect bites, sunburn.
- Adverse reactions: local irritation, dermatitis, rash, burning, tenderness