



medical | acne treatment gel proves promising

by Ada Polla Tray

Acne affects young and old alike, and its emotional effects range from mild embarrassment to major shame. Since the origins of the skin condition are unclear, finding acne treatment options continues to challenge skin care and spa professionals.

Last summer, Galderma Laboratories announced that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Differin® (adapalene) Gel, 0.3 percent, for acne treatment. Differin Gel, 0.3 percent went on the market and became available with a prescription in July 2007.

Differin Gel, 0.3 percent, offers a higher concentration formulation of Differin® (adapalene) 0.1 percent, providing physicians with a more potent formulation of adapalene that is, according to Galderma Laboratories, efficacious enough to treat moderate to moderately severe acne while still providing a favorable side effect profile.

The molecule and indication

Adapalene is a retinoid and a very interesting molecule for acne, as it helps regulate sebum production. More specifically, however, this molecule offers a powerful therapeutic option for retentional acne, as it acts on the maturation of keratinocytes.

While only recently FDA approved in the U.S., this molecule has been used in the treatment of mild acne with great success in Europe for more than 20 years. While a higher concentration may make the gel powerful enough to treat severe acne, typically, adapalene is considered

most effective on mild acne when the lesions are superficial and of medium intensity.

The pros

Retinoid based products have a long therapeutic record of efficacy in the treatment of acne. As a retinoid based product, Differin joins a slew of competing prod-

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ucts including Retin-A cream, which is used today mostly off-label for rejuvenation, Accutane®, an oral formulation of retinoids and Tazorac or tarazotene, which is known for the treatment of psoriasis but is used off-label for the treatment of acne.

The main advantage of adapalene is that it is more stable and less reactive to light and oxygen than the retinoid molecule present in Retin-A. Adapalene is also advantageous for darker skin types.

The cons

The disadvantages of adapalene, as with all retinoids, is the irritation that follows application, which is most noticeable on sensitive, inflamed skin types. This



product should not be used in conjunction with AHA or BHA peels. ■

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