The effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of pimecrolimus and tacrolimus for atopic eczema: a systematic review and economic evaluation

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Record Status
This is a bibliographic record of a published health technology assessment from a member of INAHTA. No evaluation of the quality of this assessment has been made for the HTA database.

Citation

Authors' objectives
The aim of this report was to consider the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of pimecrolimus for mild to moderate atopic eczema and tacrolimus for moderate to severe atopic eczema compared with current standard treatment in adults and children.

Authors' conclusions
There is limited evidence from a small number of randomised controlled trials (RCTs) that pimecrolimus is more effective than placebo treatment in controlling mild to moderate atopic eczema. Although greater than for pimecrolimus, the evidence base for tacrolimus in moderate to severe atopic eczema is also limited. At both 0.1% and 0.03% potencies, tacrolimus appears to be more effective than the placebo treatment and mild topical corticosteroids. However, these are not the most clinically relevant comparators. Compared with potent topical corticosteroids, no significant difference was shown. Short-term adverse effects with both immunosuppressants are relatively common, but appear to be mild. Experience of long-term use of the agents is lacking so the risk of rare but serious adverse effects remains unknown. No conclusions can be confidently drawn about the cost-effectiveness of pimecrolimus or tacrolimus compared with active topical corticosteroid comparators. Areas for further research should focus on the effectiveness and safety of the treatments through good-quality RCTs and further economic analysis.

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