

Assessing the Value of Fusidic Acid in Dermatology

Proceedings from LEO Pharma Satellite Symposium,
European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV)
Vienna, 18 May 2007

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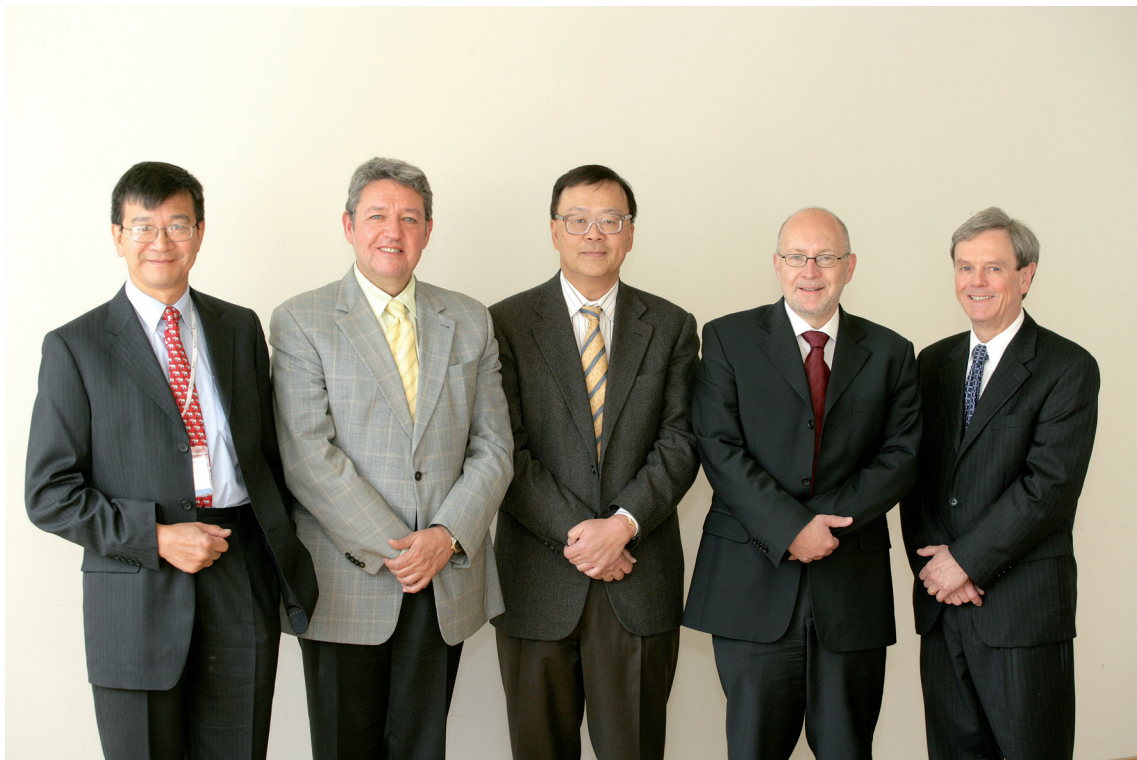
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Speakers at the LEO Symposium (left to right): Dr Tony Chu, Dr Dimitris Rigopoulos, Professor Donald Leung, Professor Thomas Diepgen, Dr Barry Long.

Chairman's Introduction: Assessing the value of fusidic acid in dermatology

This supplement covers the contents of a symposium that was held in Vienna, Austria, on 17 May 2007 at the 16th Congress of the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology.

Fusidic acid has been a mainstay in the treatment of dermatological infections, particularly those caused by *Staphylococcus aureus*, for many years. The aim of the symposium was to present a comprehensive account of the characteristics, clinical effectiveness and potential for resistance development of fusidic acid, placed in context with other drugs also used in dermatology. This compilation adds the results of newer studies, not previously reviewed, to those of older ones. It is timely, in light of the recent launch of a new fusidic acid/steroid combination formulation, namely fusidic acid 2%/betamethasone valerate 0.1% lipid cream (Fucicort® Lipid).

The first article, by Dr D. Rigopoulos, presents a brief overview of the value of fusidic acid for controlling *S. aureus*. This is followed by a review of the evidence for the clinical efficacy of plain fusidic acid formulations, by Dr B. Long. I then discuss the role of *S. aureus* in atopic eczema, highlighting the effects of superantigens released by the bacterium. The article by Dr T. Chu reviews the use of antibacterial/steroid combination therapy to combat the "vicious cycle" of dryness of the skin, inflammation and infection that is seen in infected eczema. Finally, Dr T. Diepgen's paper reports on an interactive session in which case histories formed the basis for a discussion of treatment success factors and the importance of patient education.

The costs of this publication have been covered by a grant from LEO Pharma, who also covered the travel costs of the participants. None of the participating doctors was working as a consultant for LEO Pharma at the time of the symposium. The articles were written by the participants, with editorial assistance from Watermeadow Medical.

September 2007
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Key words

Staphylococcus aureus; fusidic acid; antibiotics; skin infections; treatment choice; impetigo; atopic dermatitis; eczema; antimicrobial peptides; superantigens; infected eczema; antibacterial; inflammation; antibacterial/steroid combination therapy; eczema; eczema school; anti-infective; compliance; patient education.