

January 2022

Topical Medications

Lower cost alternatives





Topical medications are applied to the skin or mucous membranes for the purpose of treating pain or other medical condition affecting a specific area of the body.

What are and why use topical medications?

- May be prescription or over-the-counter medications
- Used when an alternative to the oral delivery of medications is needed
- Might have a decreased potential for adverse effects associated with an oral therapy for a certain injured party or population of patients
- Potentially play an increased role in treatments for a catastrophically injured claimant or in one with co-morbid conditions that cause dysphagia (difficulty swallowing); thus, the topical route offers ease of administration

Topical medication use in injuries

- Generally considered second- or third-line treatments in nationally recognized guidelines and state-based formularies or medical treatment protocols
- Could be helpful as industry shifts away from the use of opioid analgesics for pain associated with non-terminal, yet chronic in nature conditions
- Use may be complicated depending on how the medication is used by the body to elicit its actions
- May wish to look for an OTC alternative, especially for commercially available products
- Care should be given to look for duplications of therapy with oral or injectable medications

Some potential concern with topical medications

- In certain states of jurisdiction, prescribers, and smaller pharmacies have identified a niche based on workers' compensation rules
- May be very high in cost
- Efficacy may not be established for some injured parties

Medication request approval considerations – topical NSAIDs



Verify topical NSAID medication is medically necessary



Is medication physician dispensed?



Preferred topical NSAIDs are Voltaren Gel Rx or OTC



Have you consulted with a clinical pharmacist?

Medication request approval considerations – topical lidocaine



Verify topical medication is medically necessary



Is medication physician dispensed?



Have first-line oral agents been tried? (TCAs, anticonvulsants)



Preferred lidocaine products are low-cost OTC

Private label topical medication **examples**

- Terocin Lotion
- New Terocin Lotion
- Terocin Patch
- Dendracin Neurodendracin Lotion
- Menthocin Patch
- Medrox-Rx Ointment
- Avalin Patch
- Limencin Lotion
- Medi-Derm Cream
- Medi-Derm/L; Medi-Derm/L-Rx Cream
- Menthoderma Ointment
- Medi-Patch/Lidocaine or Medi-Patch
- LenzaPro Patch
- Lidopro Ointment
- Lidopro Patch
- Lidothol Pad
- Nulido Gel
- Ultracin Lotion
- Exoten-C Lotion
- Xoten-C Lotion
- Renovo Patch
- 1st Medx-Patch with Lidocaine

Private label topical medication **characteristics**

- Commercially available topical (ointment, cream, gel, patch) with a single NDC and is **not** a compounded medication
- Ingredients include a combination of over-the-counter ingredients
- Cost exceeds \$150
- Often physician dispensed

Private label topical medication **top concerns**



Cost vs.
alternatives



Clinical effectiveness
for injury



OTC products safety
and efficacy

Private label topical medications **examples and alternatives**

PRIVATE LABEL TOPICALS

Brand names	Menthol	Methyl Salicylate	Capsaicin	Camphor	Lidocaine	AWP†
Terocin Lotion	10%	25%	0.03%	-	2.50%	\$398.50
Terocin Patch	4%	-	-	-	4%	\$485.00 (10/box)
Nulido Gel	1%	-	-	-	4%	\$499.82

ALTERNATIVE MEDICATIONS

Brand name (manufacturer)	Menthol	Methyl Salicylate	Capsaicin	Camphor	Lidocaine	AWP†
Aspercreme® with Lidocaine Cream (Chattem, Inc.)					4.0%	\$6.30 (2 oz.)
Aspercreme® with Lidocaine Patch (Chattem, Inc.)					4.0%	\$7.08 (5/box)
Greaseless BENGAY® Cream (Johnson & Johnson)	10.0%	15.0%				\$3.95 (2 oz.)
Icy Hot® Cream (Chattem, Inc.)	10.0%	30.0%				\$4.91 (3 oz.)
Icy Hot® Patch (Chattem, Inc.)	5.0%					\$5.48 (5/box)
Icy Hot® with Lidocaine Cream (Chattem, Inc.)	1.0%				4.0%	\$6.60 (3 oz.)
Ultra Strength BENGAY® Cream (Johnson & Johnson)	10.0%	30.0%		4.0%		\$6.97 (4 oz.)
Muscle Rub Ultra Strength Cream (AmerisourceBergen)	10.0%	30.0%		4.0%		\$7.99 (4 oz.)
ZIKS Arthritis Pain Relief Cream (Nnodum Corp)	1.0%	12.0%	0.025%			\$25.99 (2 oz.)
Salonpas® Pain Relief Patch (Hisamitsu America, Inc.)	3.0%	10.0%				\$10.36 (10/box)
Salonpas® Lidocaine 4% Patch					4.0%	\$9.98 (6/box)
Capsaicin Cream (Ferndale Laboratories, Inc.)			0.025%			\$9.95 (2 oz.)
Capsaicin Hot Patch (Rite Aid Corp)			0.025%			\$2.39 (3/box)

†Average Wholesale Price, July 2019; per 4 oz. or 5–15 patches as package sizes vary

NOTE: Multiple bottles or boxes are often dispensed at one time

Disclaimer: Not all commercially available topical analgesics are represented in this chart. Additionally, not all products have registered trademarks.

Medication request approval **considerations**



Verify topical medication is medically necessary



Is medication physician dispensed?



Have first-line oral agents been tried?



Have you consulted with a clinical pharmacist?

Optum Ask-a-Pharmacist information resource



CONTACT VIA:

- VitalPoint®
- Email: optum.askapharmacist@optum.com
- Phone: 1-866-742-7676
- Web: workcompauto.optum.com/resources/ask-a-pharmacist

Optum prescriber outreach resource



PRESCRIBER OUTREACH

Prescribers of injured parties receiving compounds and private label topical medications will receive an educational letter from Optum related to limited efficacy data and lower-cost OTC alternatives.

OPTUM
175 Kelsey Lane
Tampa, FL 33019

Imp_TimeStamp

000001
>000001 00000 001 P50697
Imp_Ful_Des1_DisplayName
Address1
Address2 Address3
City, State ZipCode

Regarding: Imp_Data_DisplayName
Claim Number: Imp_Data_ClaimNumber SOU: Imp_Data_StateOfJurisdiction
DOB: Imp_Data_DateOfBirth
DOI: Imp_Data_DateOfInjury

Dear MWMed1PrescriberDisplayName:

On behalf of Imp_Data_Carrier_Name, Optum is managing the pharmacy benefits for your patient's workers' compensation or auto liability injury. We achieve positive patient health outcomes by working collaboratively to ensure patients receive safe, appropriate and cost-effective medication therapy. Our files show that you prescribed Imp_Data_DisplayName MWMed1NDCDescription.

Medication Name/Dosage	Quantity	Days Supply	Last Filled	Pharmacy Name	Pharmacy Phone
MWMed1NDCDescription	1.000	5.000	MWMed1SoDa	MWMed1PharmacyName	1234567890

A number of private-label topical analgesics are available for the treatment of different types of pain and often contain over-the-counter (OTC) medications. Very little data is available with regard to the efficacy and safety of these private-label topical analgesics, and as such, these products have not been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Furthermore, these private-label topical analgesics may cost up to one hundred times more than their OTC counterparts, including but not limited to, Bengay[®], Icy Hot[®], Salonpas[®] and generic products.¹ With regard to patient safety, these products also tend to contain much higher concentrations of their active ingredients, including menthol, methyl salicylate, capsaicin and lidocaine. In fact, a warning has been issued by the FDA regarding the potential for, in rare instances, serious burns associated with the use of topical OTC pain relievers that contain menthol, methyl salicylate or capsaicin.²

If a topical analgesic is medically necessary, please consider the above information and prescribe an OTC alternative at the lowest effective dose for the shortest period of time.

On behalf of Imp_Data_Carrier_Name and Optum, we appreciate your cooperation in the collaborative effort to provide safe, appropriate and cost-effective medication therapy. To provide feedback, please fax 1-800-514-3371.

Sincerely,
The Clinical Services team

¹ BMJournals/RED BOOK*[database online]. Town Health Analytics, an IBM Company. January 2020.
² U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)[website]. FDA Drug Safety Communication, 2015. Rare case of serious burns with use of over-the-counter topical muscle and joint pain relievers.

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About Optum Workers' Comp and Auto No-Fault Solutions

Optum Workers' Comp and Auto No-Fault Solutions collaborates with clients to lower costs while improving health outcomes for the injured persons we serve. Our comprehensive pharmacy, ancillary, medical services, and settlement solutions, combine data, analytics, and extensive clinical expertise with innovative technology to ensure injured persons receive safe, appropriate and cost-effective care throughout the lifecycle of a claim. For more information, email us at expectmore@optum.com.

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