



ACNE, ROSACEA, AND RELATED DISORDERS (INCLUDING HIDRADENITIS SUPPURATIVA)

COST OF MEDICATIONS IN THE TREATMENT OF ACNE IN EAST MALAYSIAN BORNEO

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Introduction: Treatment of acne is prolonged involving a lot of cost for both patients and the government. In Malaysia, medications taken from government specialist outpatient clinics are free of charge and this impart a lot of resource allocation from the Ministry of Health.

Aim: The aim of this study is to determine the cost of medications for both the government and the patients in the treatment of acne in a Dermatology Clinic in Sarawak, Malaysia.

Materials and Methods: This study was conducted in the Dermatology Clinic, Sarawak General Hospital among 165 patients with moderate acne on presentation. Patients were interviewed on all the over-the-counter products used and all the pricing. Data from the medical records were searched and all medications used were calculated for the costing.

Results: The mean cost of treating one episode of moderate acne in a government hospital in Sarawak, Malaysia was USD 477.37 per patient. It cost the Ministry of Health USD 213.05 to treat an episode of moderate acne. On average, patients spent USD 264.32 buying over-the-counter products. Majority of the patients were on antibiotics (77.6%) followed by isotretinoin (53.9%). Working patients spent more on their medications compared to students (USD 597.80 vs. USD 327.65, $p = 0.01$). Females also tend to spend more on their anti-acne products although not statistically significantly different from males (USD 549.00 vs. USD 363.22, $p = 0.11$). Ethnicity, family income and education level did not influence the amount spent on anti-acne medications.

Conclusion: Treatment of acne is not cheap. Determining the costing of medications will help dermatologists and hospital administrators optimize resource allocation for the effective treatment of acne.

