



PIGMENTATION

MODIFIED KLIGMAN FORMULA LEADING TO 'TOPICAL STEROID DAMAGED FACE': A CLINICAL STUDY

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Introduction: The combination of hydroquinone 5%, tretinoin 0.1% and dexamethasone 0.1% is the original Kligman regimen (1975) for hyperpigmentation. Lately, combinations having higher potency corticosteroids like mometasone, are marketed as 'modified Kligman regime'. One combination having fluocinolone acetonide is approved by the US-FDA.

Aim: The present study was conducted to assess the reasons for use and adverse effects of the modified regime.

Materials and methods: The study was conducted in the OPD of a tertiary care hospital in patients seeking consultation for adverse effects of topical corticosteroids on the face. We included 30 patients who had used the modified Kligman regimen on the face for at least one month for any indication. Patients using any other form of topical steroid were excluded from the study.

Results: The mean age of the patients studied was 30 years, with female preponderance (F = 86.67%). Combinations having mometasone furoate were most commonly used (66.67%), followed by flucinolone acetonide (30%) and hydrocortisone acetate (3.3%). Forty percent were applying the cream for one or more years. Only 23.3% patients had a physician's prescription and the rest had purchased the creams over-the-counter on the advice of friends, peers or relatives (46.6%), pharmacists (16.6%), or media (16.6%). Though melasma (23.3%) and other hyperpigmented lesions (30%) were common indications of use, 26.6% had used them as just fairness creams. The side-effects of corticosteroids seen were erythema (56.7%), telangiectasia (50%), acne (30%), hypopigmentation (20%), photosensitivity (13.3%), atrophy (10%), rosacea (6.7%), hyperpigmentation (6.7%), hirsutism (6.7%) and perioral dermatitis (3.3%). More than one side-effect was present in 83.3% cases.

Discussion: Though our study group was small, what clearly emerges is that the over-the-counter availability of the modified Kligman regimen is leading to its misuse as a fairness cream. Further, the indiscriminate use for long periods is leading to the phenomenon of 'corticosteroid damaged face'.

