

## IN THIS ISSUE...

Drs Marie Lodén and colleagues document that the use of an emollient can delay the relapse of treated hand eczema (p. 602–606). However, the reported delay was for only approximately 20 days, in contrast to 2 days if no treatment was given at all. This underlines the importance of emollients in therapy for hand eczema, but also shows the importance of intermittent topical corticosteroid therapy, as documented by Veien et al. (see their ref. 10), where approximately 85% of patients did not have a relapse of eczema during a 6-month observation period. Emollients are extremely important, but which emollient should one choose? Observations in mice have shown that those containing ceramides may have the best effect (1); however, this requires further research in which emollients are compared with each other, and not just emollient vs. no emollient.

## REFERENCE

1. Halkier-Sørensen L. Occupational skin diseases. *Contact Derm* 1996; 35 Suppl 1, 1–120.

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