

Leave Antibiotic Cream Alone

Using topical antibiotics in wound care will not help your cut heal faster and it might be causing more harm than you realize.



Allergic Reaction
30% of people with chronic wounds have reactions to topical antibiotics like Neosporin. As many as 12% of all adults are allergic.

“We never recommend Neosporin because it has such a high risk for contact dermatitis.”

–Dermatologist Dr. Sophie Greenberg



Resistance
Over-using topical antibiotics makes it harder for some prescription antibiotics to work when you are sick. Antibiotic creams have also been linked to a rise in antibiotic-resistant infections (MRSA) which are difficult to treat and can be life-threatening.

FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS TO CARE FOR WOUNDS AT HOME

1

CLEAN WITH SOAP & WATER

Thoroughly clean the wound daily with water and unscented soap.

2

APPLY VASELINE

Apply a thin layer of 100% pure petroleum jelly/Vaseline.

3

APPLY A FRESH BANDAGE

Replace the band-aid daily or if it becomes wet/dirty.

First Aid Ointment

Topical antibiotic ointments contain many allergens and DO NOT provide extra protection against infection.

A study by the Walter Reed Army Medical Center proved that wounds treated with simple petroleum jelly (Vaseline) did not become any more infected than wounds treated with an over-the-counter (OTC) antibiotic ointment. Topical antibiotic ointments have a high risk of allergy and do not show significant improvements to wound healing or infection.

Allergic contact dermatitis (ACD) may appear as a rash, hives, or red irritation that resembles eczema. You might see a rash developing and want to apply more antibiotic ointment to the area. You should not apply more ointment as it usually makes the problem worse.

If you have been using antibiotic ointment for longer than 7 days with no improvement, you should stop using the medication and see your healthcare provider.



Antibiotic Cream Called Allergen Of The Year

Bacitracin, a common component of OTC ointments was named “allergen of the year” in 2003 due to a increase in related allergies and anaphylaxis (an-a-fi-LAK-sis): a serious allergic response which often causes hives, swelling, and which can be fatal.

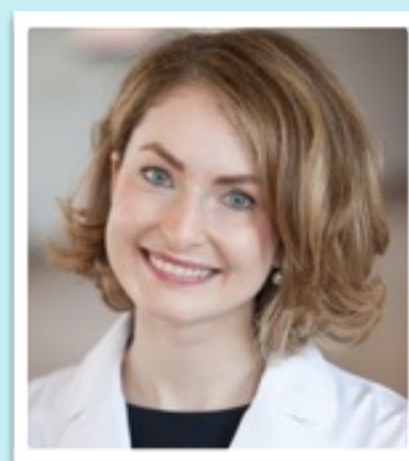
In 2010, the American Contact Dermatitis Association (ACDA) ranked the Bacitracin allergy #3 on the contact dermatitis patch test (a formal skin allergy testing protocol).

IMPORTANT NOTES FROM YOUR DERMATOLOGIST

Dr. Sophie Greenberg

I do not recommend using topical antibiotics unless instructed by your physician. I will prescribe topical antibiotics for a limited time period to treat a known skin infection but never recommend using antibiotics for any other purpose.

After a surgery or procedure, I always tell patients to apply vaseline only. The risks of using topical antibiotics under the wrong circumstances include development of antibiotic resistance (so the antibiotics won't work when you truly need it) and the potential development of allergic contact dermatitis (which also puts it out of the running for antibiotics when you need it).



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