Chloracetamide Allergy

J.P.

Nater

Groningen

Author's address: J. P. Nater, MD, State University Hospital, Department of Dermatology, Groningen (The Netherlands)

Sir,

In a recent issue of *Dermatologica* (144: 108–114, 1972) Smeenk and Prins gave a description of contact allergic reactions due to Hirudoid ointment. They could demonstrate that this allergy in most cases was caused by the preservative chloracetamide. They concluded, therefore, that the use of chloracetamide in creams and ointments for the treatment of skin diseases has to be discontinued. We would like to point out:

As mentioned in the first publication on chloracetamide allergy [Nater, 1971], in a series of 18 women tested as control, no less than 2 reacted positive on chloracetamide. This allergy was (apparently) due to contact with a chloracetamide-containing cosmetic preparation.

In addition, Calnan [1971] described a case of chloracetamide allergy, caused by an eye cream, a cosmetic preparation.

As a matter of fact in a series of 6 cases of chloracetamide allergy encountered last year, 3 could be traced to Hirudoid ointment, 3 others, however, had to be attributed to a cosmetic preparation. Our conclusion, therefore, in accordance with Maibach [1971], has to be that chloracetamide is a rather active sensitizer, that it should not be used as a preservative in either pharmaceutical or cosmetic preparations and that for the time being chloracetamide 0.2% in aqua has to be included in routine patch test series.

References

Calnan, C. D.: Personal communication (in *Contact Dermatitis Newsletter* No. 9, January 1971, p. 215).

Maibach, H.: Personal communication (in *Contact Dermatitis Newsletter* No. 9, January 1971, p. 213).

Nater, J. P.: Allergic reactions due to chloracetamide. *Dermatologica*, Basel 142:191–192 (1971).