



CustomerCare

PROGRAMME For the Pharmacy Team

Cymex®

Cold sores

Welcome to the Customer Care Programme for the Pharmacy Team – a series of modules looking at how you can help customers manage common healthcare concerns.

This module focuses on cold sores and how Cymex and Cymex Ultra can help customers manage this condition.

Cold sores are caused by the Herpes simplex virus, a highly contagious virus that can transfer from person to person very easily. The virus is usually passed on during early childhood, where it then lies dormant or inactive until something triggers it (e.g. feeling tired or ill).

When the virus becomes active, it travels to the skin's surface. This triggers the first stage of a cold sore – a tingling, itchy sensation at the site of the cold sore. This stage is followed by fluid-filled blisters that weep and crust over after approximately 48 hours. Cold sores usually clear up within seven to 10 days.

Customer scenarios

Customer 1: An 18-year old girl wants your advice as she feels run down and has had a cold sore for a few days. The scab on her lips is very dry and sore.

ADVICE

This customer is presenting with the latter signs of a cold sore. To help relieve her symptoms you could recommend Cymex Cream. This product will provide effective relief from the cold sore symptoms as well as having a soothing effect on cracked and painful skin. It will also help to control any infection. Advise her to apply the cream sparingly every hour until the cold sore clears.

While it may be difficult to avoid getting a cold sore, you can advise customers to:

- Try to avoid stressful situations
- Wash their hands after touching the cold sore
- Avoid sharing any lipstick or lipgloss
- Avoid picking the cold sore to prevent the virus from spreading.

After reading this module you will:

- Understand the causes and different stages of cold sores
- Be able to recommend an appropriate treatment
- Be able to help customers avoid cold sore triggers.

Customer 2: A man in his early 30s comes in and asks for something for his cold sore. He gets them quite often and asks if there is anything he can do to avoid them.

Firstly, reassure this customer that cold sores are very common and that some people have recurring cold sores two to three times a year. The virus that causes cold sores lays dormant in the nerves until it becomes active due to certain triggers.

These could be:

- A cold or another virus
- Injury to the area
- Changes in weather – hot sun or cold winds
- Feeling stressed or upset.

Advise the customer, that he should try to avoid these triggers in future, if possible.

ADVICE

You could recommend Cymex Ultra which contains the antiviral aciclovir. This will help to slow down the growth of the virus and speed up the healing process (if used at the tingling stage). Advise him to apply it as soon as he feels the first stage of the cold sore (the tingling sensation) and use the packaging to point out the directions for use.

Other helpful tips to pass on to customers include:

- Eating a healthy diet to boost their immune systems
- Drinking plenty of water to keep skin hydrated
- Avoiding sharing cups, towels etc with anyone – to stop the spread of the virus
- Avoiding kissing people with cold sores.

Cymex FactFile

Cymex Cream

Contains urea, cetrimide, dimeticone and chlorocresol

What is it recommended for?

The relief of all cold sore symptoms and for sore chapped lips. It has a triple action formula to:

- Soothe the tingling feeling
- Relieve painful cracked lips
- Control infection.

How does it work?

- Urea dries out the infection
- Dimeticone keeps natural moisture in the skin, preventing scabs from cracking and coming off too soon and relieves itching
- Dimeticone also protects the skin, providing a mechanical barrier to guard against harmful and irritating stimuli
- Chlorocresol acts as an antiseptic preventing further infection of the broken skin.

What are the dosage and directions for use?

Apply sparingly every hour to the affected area.



Cymex®

Cymex Ultra

Contains aciclovir

What is it recommended for?

- An effective antiviral cold sore treatment
- Preventing the progress of the cold sore (if used at tingling stage), either stopping the cold sore altogether, or limiting the severity of an attack
- As a result, Cymex Ultra speeds up the healing of a cold sore.

How does it work?



The active ingredient, aciclovir 5% works as an antiviral agent, stopping the virus from multiplying.

What are the dosage and directions for use?

Apply a thin layer to the area five times a day, at approximately four-hourly intervals for at least four days.



Recommending Cymex

Product	When would you recommend?	What additional advice would you give a customer?
		
		



Self test questions

1. Cold sores are caused by:

- a. Bacteria
- b. Virus
- c. Fungus
- d. None of the above

2. Which of the following can trigger a cold sore:

- a. Drinking lots of water
- b. Sharing towels
- c. Being stressed
- d. None of the above

3. Cymex Cream should be applied:

- a. Every hour
- b. Every four hours
- c. Three times a day
- d. Five times a day

4. Cymex Ultra contains:

- a. Dimeticone
- b. Urea
- c. Chlorocresol
- d. Aciclovir

Answers: 1b, 2c, 3a, 4d

Cymex cream Active ingredients: White cream containing Urea 1.0%, Cetrimide 0.5%, Dimeticone 350 9.0% and Chlorocresol 0.1% **Indication:** For the application to cold sores and cracked lips. **Dosage:** Apply sparingly every hour. **Contraindications:** None known. **Warnings and precautions:** For external use only. If symptoms persist consult a doctor. **Interactions:** None known. **Pregnancy and lactation:** Consult your doctor before use if pregnant or breast-feeding. **Undesirable effects:** None known. **Legal category:** GSL. **PL number:** 30306/0028 **MA Holder:** Actavis Group PTC ehf, Reykjavikurvegi 76-78, 220 Hafnarfjordur Iceland. **Pack size:** 5g tube (RRP £1.95 excl. VAT) **Date of preparation:** 1st November 2011.

Cymex Ultra Active ingredient: Aciclovir 5 % w/w Cream. **Indication:** Treatment of herpes simplex virus infections of the lips and face. **Dosage and Administration:** A thin film of cream should be applied to the infected and immediately adjacent skin areas 5 times a day at 4 hourly intervals throughout the day, omitting the night time application. Cymex Ultra should be applied to the lesions or impending lesions as soon as possible, preferably during the early stages. Treatment can also be started during the later stages. Treatment should be continued for at least 4 days. If healing has not occurred, treatment may be continued for up to 10 days. If lesions are still present after 10 days, users should be advised to consult a doctor. **Contraindications:** Hypersensitivity to aciclovir, valaciclovir, propylene glycol or any other preparation ingredients. **Warnings and precautions:** Only recommended for use on cold sores on the lips and face. The cream must not be applied to the mucous membranes, as local irritation may occur. Avoid contact with the eye. People with particularly severe recurrent herpes labialis should be encouraged to seek medical advice. Consider oral dosing in severely immunocompromised. Cymex Ultra must not be used to treat ocular or genital herpes. **Interactions:** Probenecid. **Pregnancy and lactation:** Seek advice of doctor before use. **Undesirable effects:** Mild drying or flaking of the skin, transient burning or stinging following application, itching, erythema, contact dermatitis following application, hypersensitivity reactions including angioedema. **Legal Category:** GSL. **PL number:** 20395/0001. **PL holder:** Relonchem Limited, 27 Old Gloucester Street, London WC1 3XX. **Pack size:** 2g tube (RRP £3.39 excl. VAT) **Date prepared:** November 2011.

No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written permission of the publishers, Actavis in association with CIG Healthcare Partnership.

You can keep these modules in your Actavis Customer Care Programme Folder. Speak to your Actavis sales representative to obtain yours. For more information, call medical enquiries on: 01271 311257 or the training helpline on: 0207 908 6488

