

From Relief to Reliance: The Truth About Steroid Creams

Background Info

Topical steroid creams are commonly used to treat conditions like eczema, psoriasis, and rashes, offering quick relief and effective symptom management. However, **improper use is a growing health concern in Singapore**. Many unknowingly purchase over-the-counter creams and use them **without medical advice, often unaware of the risks**.

Long-term or excessive use can lead to:

- Skin thinning and damage
- Steroid dependence
- Adverse reactions and complications

Protect your skin health — use topical steroids only under professional guidance to prevent misuse and avoid long-term harm.

Needs Statement

- 1 There is a need to address the growing misuse and overuse of topical steroid creams, which is exacerbated by the lack of patient awareness about prescription requirements (66.25% of patients are unaware).
- 2 Patients lack accessible educational resources to guide them in the safe use of topical steroid creams, leading to improper use and severe side effects like skin thinning and steroid dependence.
- 3 A targeted health communication strategy is urgently needed to educate patients and promote safe and effective usage.
- 4 There is a need to educate patients, as steroid creams' unrestricted availability over the counter without a prescription contributes to improper use and associated health risks.

Our Campaign

Our campaign aims to raise awareness of the potential risks associated with the long-term or improper use of steroid creams in the treatment of eczema and other skin conditions. It consists of 3 parts:

Solution 1: Comic Strips

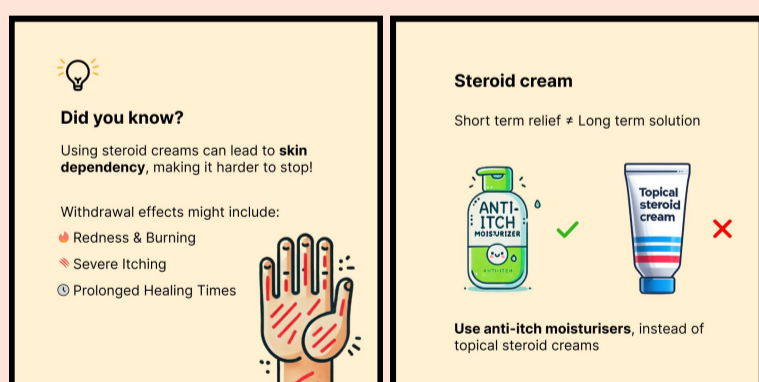


Theory 1: Entertainment-Education Approach

The entertainment-education (E-E) approach integrates educational messages into engaging storytelling to **inform and influence positive behaviour change**. By immersing audiences in relatable narratives and characters, E-E **reduces resistance to learning** and **encourages emotional and cognitive involvement**.

Comics combine visual storytelling and relatable characters, which help make health issues like the overuse of steroid cream accessible and engaging. By portraying the potential drawbacks of steroid creams as a fun and compelling narrative, the comic aims to **subtly educate and foster awareness amongst individuals without feeling overtly instructional**. This narrative-driven engagement helps audiences internalise the message and take action.

Solution 2: Infographics



Theory 2: Elaboration Likelihood Model

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) explains how people process persuasive messages through two routes: the central route, which involves careful, thoughtful evaluation, and the peripheral route, which relies on superficial cues like visuals or credibility. The route taken depends on the audience's motivation and ability to process the information.

Through our infographics, we aim to target both routes. For the central route, we present **clear, evidence-based information** about the risks of steroid cream overuse and alternative solutions. For the peripheral route, **visually appealing graphics and concise messages attract attention**, helps make the information easier to grasp for less motivated audiences.

Solution 3: Real Stories from Eczema Patients



Theory 3: Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) highlights the interplay between personal beliefs, environmental influences, and behaviours, emphasising that individuals learn through observation and modelling.

By showcasing stories of relatable individuals who have successfully transitioned from steroid cream to healthier alternatives. We demonstrate the process of change, helping to reinforce self-efficacy and positive outcome expectations. By providing realistic examples of overcoming challenges, real-life stories motivate and empower audiences to adopt healthier behaviours