

Table III. Cont'd

No.	Recommendation	Strength	Certainty of evidence	Evidence
Isotretinoin				
4.1	For patients with severe acne or for patients who have failed standard treatment with oral or topical therapy, we recommend isotretinoin. Remark: Acne patients with psychosocial burden or scarring should be considered as having severe acne and to be candidates for isotretinoin. For patients undergoing treatment with isotretinoin, monitoring of LFTs and lipids should be considered, but CBC monitoring is not needed in healthy patients. Population-based studies have not identified increased risk of neuropsychiatric conditions or inflammatory bowel disease in acne patients undergoing treatment with isotretinoin. For persons of childbearing potential, pregnancy prevention is mandatory.		Good practice statement	
4.2	For patients with severe acne, we conditionally recommend traditional daily dosing of isotretinoin over intermittent dosing of isotretinoin.	Conditional	Low	148-150
4.3	For patients prescribed isotretinoin, we conditionally recommend either standard isotretinoin or lidose-isotretinoin.	Conditional	High	151
Physical modalities				
5.1	For patients with acne, we conditionally recommend against adding pneumatic broadband light to adapalene 0.3% gel.	Conditional	Low	152

*Conditional recommendations were made for clascoterone and sarecycline due to high current cost of treatment that may impact equitable acne treatment access.

†Conditional recommendation was made for combined oral contraceptive pills due to the variability in patient values and preferences related to contraception and hormonal medications.

complementary and alternative medicine, and dietary and environmental interventions. Given the diversity of treatment options for acne, shared decision-making is important to individualize acne care based on the potential treatment benefits and risks, the severity, extent, and region of acne involvement, treatment costs, patient preferences, and other factors (Fig 1).

TOPICAL THERAPIES

Topical therapies are the mainstay of acne treatment: they may be used for acne initial treatment and maintenance as monotherapy (except topical antibiotics) or used in combination with other topical or oral agents. Commonly used topical therapies include topical retinoids, benzoyl peroxide (BP), antibiotics, clascoterone, salicylic acid, and azelaic acid. When managing acne with topical therapies, multimodal therapy combining multiple mechanisms of actions is recommended as a good practice statement to optimize efficacy and to reduce the risk of antibiotic resistance.

Topical retinoids

Topical retinoids are vitamin A derivatives and serve as the cornerstone of acne treatment since they

are comedolytic and anti-inflammatory, improve dyspigmentation, and enable maintenance of acne clearance. Four types of topical retinoids, including topical tretinoin,⁵⁸ adapalene,⁵⁹ tazarotene,^{60,61} and trifarotene,⁶² are FDA-approved for acne treatment in the US. Each retinoid binds to a different set of retinoic acid receptors and confers modest differences in activity, tolerability and efficacy.

We recommend topical retinoids for acne treatment based on moderate certainty evidence from 20 studies (Table III and Supplementary Table XII, available via Mendeley at <https://data.mendeley.com/datasets/z2bmdwdf9/2>).^{59,62-64,71-81,153-155} Compared to vehicle at 12 weeks, a greater proportion of patients treated with topical retinoids achieved IGA success in 4 RCTs (risk ratio [RR], 1.57 [1.21, 2.04]).^{59,63,64,71} Topical retinoid use may be limited by side effects, including increased risk of burning sensation, dryness, erythema, exfoliation, peeling, and pain. Treatment-emergent adverse events leading to discontinuation at 12 weeks were low (1.4%) in 3 RCTs.^{63,80,155} Existing comparative effectiveness data do not suggest superiority of one topical retinoid against another, with efficacy and tolerability differing by specific concentrations and formulations.^{153,156-159} Irritation may be particularly common at higher concentrations, which