

Vitiligo Support UK
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Dear Doctors,

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter & for supporting your patient with vitiligo. Vitiligo Support UK is a charity registered with the Charity Commission providing information & support for all those with the condition vitiligo, & their families.

We are writing to clarify an issue relating to sunscreens available on prescription, that we are finding is reducing patients' access to such products for the protection of their skin.

As you will know, vitiligo produces what can become extensive patches of skin with no pigment in them. The affected patches have no melanin & whenever the affected skin is exposed to high UVA & UVB light, it will burn, causing further skin trauma, immediate pain & a long term increased risk of skin cancers.

In general sunscreens are marked as ACBS in the British National Formulary.

However, the British National Formulary (January 2017) also states, that:

“Borderline substances

The preparations marked ‘ACBS’ are regarded as drugs when prescribed for skin protection against ultraviolet radiation in abnormal cutaneous photosensitivity resulting from genetic disorders or photodermatoses, **including vitiligo** and those resulting from radiotherapy; chronic or recurrent herpes simplex labialis. Preparations with SPF less than 30 should not normally be prescribed”

We are advised that prescriptions for sunscreen for vitiligo patients should still be marked “ACBS”.

We hope that this clarifies what is an important issue for patients with vitiligo & that if you have any further questions relating to the prescription of sunscreens you will not hesitate to contact us.

VITILIGO SUPPORT UK
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