

Guidance on test protocols for certain claims in cosmetics advertising

In the preparation for the establishment of the panel of experts, discussions have focused on providing further guidance on selected areas where Clearcast, the RACC and the ASA may have disagreed to some extent in the past.

With the improved dialogue between the experts, the panel has agreed to provide guidance on some important principles relating to the testing for cumulative moisturisation and to testing products on body parts other than that of the intended site of application (for example, testing the moisturising effect of a face cream on the arm).

Cumulative moisturisation

Previous guidance on cumulative moisturisation appears to have been unnecessarily complicated and burdensome, and the panel has therefore decided to specify the basic principles it would look for in any test to prove cumulative moisturisation.

The basic principles are:

- Parallel untreated control, or
- Placebo (if with active ingredient)
- Tests should be conducted with multiple time points (start, interim points and end point)
- The number of time points depends on the claim, but there should be no less than three time points
- A wash out period may be required, depending on the claim
- The tests should be carried out on a representative population, i.e. representative of the target group
- The sample size should be adequate – but the acceptable size will depend on the claim
- The use by the test group should be the same as instructions in the ad
- If the product is specifically targeting or tested on people with certain skin conditions, such as dry skin, this should be mentioned in the ad

Test site

Testing of products on other body-parts than the intended site of application is acceptable under certain circumstances. Briefly summarised, these are:

Measure	Method	Can use forearm data for face to measure effect	Can use forearm data for face to measure magnitude of effect	Forearm data suitable for competitive claims
Moisturisation	Electrical	Yes	Yes	No
Exfoliation	Dansyl chloride / DHA	Yes	Yes	No
Skin turnover	Dansyl chloride / DHA	Yes	No	No
Radiance	Spectrophotometer or expert grader	Yes	Yes	No
Fine lines and wrinkles	Image analysis of expert grader	No	No	No
Mechanical properties	Mechanical methods	Yes	Yes	No