

Health Ministry bans OTC sale of 14 steroid creams

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The decision was taken following consultation with the Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTAB) which had recommended a ban on the sale of such creams without prescription



To prevent the indiscriminate sale of ointments containing steroids and antibiotics without prescription, the Union Health Ministry has banned over-the-counter sale of 14 such products.

In a notification issued on March 23, the ministry has put 14 steroid-based creams and ointments under the Schedule H category by making amendments to certain Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945.

The decision was taken following consultation with the Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTAB) which had recommended a ban on the sale of such creams without prescription and had also submitted their recommendations to the Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation (CDSCO).

The move comes after dermatologists complained that pharmaceutical companies were selling steroid-based creams and ointments to patients who use them without medical guidance.

The revised rules will apply to skin creams that contain steroids or other prescription drugs and not for ordinary face-cleansing and moisturisers.

The creams which have been banned are alclometasone, beclomethasone, desonide, desoximetasone and flucinonide among others.