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On Drugs and Therapeutics

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IN BRIEF

Elidel and Protopic

The FDA issued a public health advisory on March 10, 2005 warning about a risk of cancer with topical formulations of tacrolimus (*Protopic*) and pimecrolimus (*Elidel*) used to treat eczema in adults and children more than 2 years old. *Elidel* has been heavily promoted to the general public on television. The warning was based on reports of dose-related cancer in animals and 29 reports of cancer (including 8 skin malignancies and 12 lymphomas) in adults and children treated with these immunosuppressive drugs. Cause and effect have not been established. When *Protopic* was first marketed, The Medical Letter warned that the possibility of an increased risk of skin malignancies and lymphoma should be kept in mind ([Med Lett Drugs Ther 2001; 43:33](#)).

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