

Type	Examples and properties [NB1]
Emollient bases	
light, nongreasy	lotions—not usually moisturising enough for atopic skin, and often sting
slightly greasy	bland moisturisers (eg aqueous cream)—preparation can be varied by adding liquid paraffin or white soft paraffin
moderately greasy	glycerine 10% in sorbolene cream—formulations in a tub or tube are more moisturising and less likely to sting than formulations in a pump pack
very greasy	bland barrier preparations (eg liquid paraffin, white soft paraffin) liquid paraffin 50% mixed with white soft paraffin 50%—rarely stings, and spreads easily emulsifying ointment—rarely stings, but more difficult to spread
Active ingredient–enriched moisturisers	
urea creams (with or without lactic acid)	useful for very dry skin or coexisting ichthyosis vulgaris, but often sting when skin has active inflammation
containing ceramides	useful for conditions associated with skin barrier dysfunction (eg atopic dermatitis, rosacea, periorificial dermatitis)
containing niacinamide	have hydrating, anti-inflammatory and anti-ageing properties; useful for conditions such as rosacea
containing panthenol (pro-vitamin B ₅)	used as a skin repair balm (eg for fissures, hand dermatitis with painful broken skin requiring wound healing)
NB1: Some emollients are subsidised by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), but they must be prescribed by a clinician and compounded by the pharmacy.	