# West Sussex woman's struggle with Topical Steroid Withdrawal highlights need for awareness and support



Mollie Oakley, a 27-year-old resident of West Sussex, developed eczema from wearing masks during 12-hour shifts in a hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic. She was subsequently prescribed a potent steroid cream, mometasone furoate, to treat the eczema around her mouth. Over time, Mollie began experiencing severe swelling and intense itching that disrupted her sleep and daily activities, leading to a diagnosis of Topical Steroid Withdrawal (TSW).

TSW occurs when the body becomes dependent on steroid creams, causing adverse effects when discontinued. Mollie's symptoms include severe itching, redness, nerve pain, and insomnia. Despite seeking various treatments and advice from multiple doctors, she continued to face challenges. Mollie also highlighted inconsistent guidance from medical professionals regarding the use and discontinuation of steroid creams.

The condition has greatly affected her social life and career, leaving her unable to work for extended periods. Mollie has spent significant amounts on various treatments to no avail and is now raising funds for a treatment called Cold Atmospheric Plasma, for which she is on a waitlist.

Mollie's experiences reflect a broader issue with TSW and the challenges many patients face with steroid creams, emphasizing the need for increased awareness and consistent medical advice.