

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF COMPETITIVE POSITIONING AND GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR LULINOL IN INDIAN TOPICAL ANTIFUNGAL MARKET

Dissertation Submitted to



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in

Pharmaceutical Management

by

Rohit Kumar Biswal

Under the Supervision and Guidance of

Dr. Ashok Peepliwal

2025



CERTIFICATE

OF RECOGNITION

This is to certify that

Mr. Rohit kumar biswal

*In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of MBA Pharmaceutical Management from the **IIHMR University**, Jaipur has successfully completed his internship at GALCARE PHARMACEUTICAL Pvt. Ltd. during Mar 10– May 31, 2025*

We appreciate her valuable contribution to the team and wish him great success in future endeavors.



Place :- Jaipur

Date :- 20/06/2025

Mr. Irfan Ahmad
Senior Marketing Head

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation titled “**Strategic Analysis Of Competitive Positioning and Growth Opportunities for Lulinol in Indian Topical Antifungal Market**” is a record of the research work undertaken by **Rohit Kumar Biswal** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MBA (Pharmaceutical Management) from the IIHMR University, Jaipur under my guidance and supervision and his approach to the research study has been sincere, scientific and analytical.



Faculty guide: **Dr. Ashok Peepliwal**

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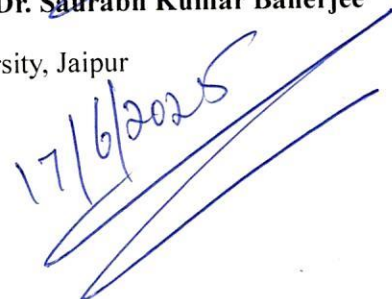
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17/6/2025

DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I, **ROHIT KUMAR BISWAL** Enrolment No. IIHMR-U/02/2023-25/0556 Here by Declare
That This Dissertation is

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in the Indian Topical Antifungal Market". I Declare That It Has Not Been

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19 JUNE 2025

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ABSTRACT

India is experiencing a surge in superficial fungal infections, particularly due to its tropical climate, poor hygiene, and rampant misuse of over-the-counter creams containing steroids. Amid this rising demand for effective antifungal solutions, Luliconazole has emerged as a newer-generation molecule known for its potent activity, shorter treatment duration, and patient-friendly once-daily application.

Lulinol, Galcare Pharma's Luliconazole-based formulation, enters this dynamic yet highly competitive topical antifungal market, where major players like Lulifin (Sun Pharma), Lulibet (Glenmark), and Luliderm (Torrent) dominate. This study was undertaken to assess Lulinol's current position, benchmark it against key competitors, and identify actionable strategies to improve its market performance.

Through a combination of market landscape analysis, product benchmarking, field survey data, and SWOT evaluation, the report highlights that while Lulinol has clinical strengths, it suffers from limited brand recall, moderate prescriber engagement, and a need for stronger promotional support. Doctors recognize luliconazole as a molecule but often associate other brands ahead of Lulinol due to legacy positioning and aggressive CME campaigns.

Key growth opportunities lie in expanding to underserved rural and semi-urban markets, enhancing branding through education and storytelling, and leveraging doctor-patient engagement tools. Regulatory compliance under CDSCO and Schedule H guidelines, along with ethical promotion aligned with UCPMP, will be essential for sustainable market presence.

In conclusion, Lulinol has the therapeutic strength to grow, but its commercial success will depend on how effectively Galcare Pharma positions it—both scientifically and strategically—in India's fast-evolving topical antifungal landscape.

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INTRODUCTION

India has seen a steady rise in superficial fungal infections, particularly tinea, due to its hot and humid climate, poor hygiene practices, and the rampant misuse of over-the-counter creams containing steroids. That's where Lulinol comes in. It's Galcare Pharmaceutical's answer, a luliconazole-based cream designed to tackle these persistent infections. This study is all about figuring out where Lulinol fits in this busy market and how it can really grow.

India's tropical climate, combined with some less-than-ideal hygiene and a lot of self-medicating, has created a boom in skin issues like ringworm (dermatophytosis). The market for creams that fight these fungi is huge, with tons of products out there. But here's the catch: people often misuse steroid-antifungal combinations or don't finish their treatment, leading to infections that are harder to kick. This makes the need for reliable, effective products like luliconazole more urgent than ever. We're talking about a multi-crore market and being smart about how you compete is crucial for lasting success.

Millions of Indians deal with fungal skin infections every year, with ringworm on the body, groin, and feet being the most common. While older options like terbinafine and clotrimazole have been mainstays, newer drugs like luliconazole are gaining traction because they're convenient – you only need to apply them once a day, and for a shorter period.

However, the treatment landscape isn't perfect. We see a lot of over-the-counter misuse of those tricky steroid-antifungal combos, and patients often don't stick to their full treatment course. This just highlights why we need trusted brands and doctors who can guide patients effectively.

Luliconazole is a relatively new antifungal that's good at fighting off those common skin fungi and penetrates the skin well. Its once-daily application and shorter treatment time make it a clear win for patients. Lulinol is Galcare Pharmaceutical's version of this promising drug. It aims to offer both strong clinical results and ease of use. If Lulinol can align its marketing, pricing, and medical education efforts strategically, it has a real chance to grab a bigger piece of the market.

Even though luliconazole has clear advantages, the market is crowded, with many brands vying for attention. This study is important because it dives deep into Lulinol's current standing, checks out what its competitors are doing, and pinpoints where the real growth opportunities lie. For Galcare, understanding these market dynamics and what doctors think will be key to making smart marketing decisions and building the brand. Ultimately, this research will show Lulinol how to truly set itself apart, become a preferred choice for prescribers, and expand its reach across the Indian topical antifungal market.

Objective of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to understand how Lulinol, Galcare Pharmaceutical's luliconazole-based formulation, stands in India's rapidly evolving topical antifungal market. With several competing brands like Lulifin, Lulibet, and Luliderm already established, it becomes crucial to explore where Lulinol fits in the minds of prescribers and consumers.

This research seeks to: Analyse Lulinol's current position in the Indian market, both in terms of brand visibility and clinical acceptance. It's essential to assess how well Lulinol is performing in comparison to competitors and what factors are influencing its reach—be it pricing, marketing efforts, or prescriber trust.

Identify opportunities for growth, especially in untapped markets or through refined promotional strategies. This includes understanding physician preferences, patient behaviour, and exploring ways to enhance Lulinol's market penetration and recall.

Draw comparisons with leading competitor brands such as Lulifin, Lulibet, and Luliderm. By evaluating their marketing strategies, product positioning, and pricing, we can pinpoint what's working well in the market and how Lulinol can differentiate itself effectively.

In essence, this study will guide Galcare Pharma with actionable insights to refine Lulinol's competitive strategy and support sustainable growth in a crowded, yet opportunity-rich, therapeutic segment.

Company Overview: Galcare Pharma

Brief on Galcare Pharma:

Galcare Pharma is a growing player in the Indian pharmaceutical landscape, with a strong commitment to improving patient care through innovative and affordable healthcare solutions. Since its inception, the company has steadily built a reputation for delivering quality formulations across multiple therapeutic categories. Galcare has focused on addressing everyday health challenges faced by Indian patients—especially in dermatology, gynaecology, general medicine, and lifestyle disorders.

Its existing product portfolio reflects this mission, comprising a wide range of offerings such as topical creams, oral medications, injectables, and nutraceuticals. Among its dermatology range, Lulinol, a luliconazole-based antifungal cream, stands out as a product with the potential to lead in the topical antifungal segment. The company continues to prioritize patient-centric innovation, good manufacturing practices, and ethical promotion as pillars of its growth.

Vision and Market Presence:

Galcare's vision is to become a trusted name in quality healthcare, driven by scientific excellence, continuous learning, and deep understanding of patient needs. The company envisions making effective therapies more accessible—especially in therapeutic areas where resistance, recurrence, or misuse is common, such as dermatophytosis (fungal infections).

Though still expanding its national footprint, Galcare has been making its presence felt through consistent field efforts, strong medical representative training, and products that resonate with current clinical needs. The brand Lulinol exemplifies this approach—bringing together medical effectiveness with convenience and affordability, making it a promising contender in a competitive market.

Market Landscape

The Indian topical antifungal market has seen rapid growth in recent years, driven by rising awareness of skin health and a significant increase in fungal infections, particularly in tropical and humid regions. Estimated to be worth several hundred crores, this segment continues to grow steadily, fuelled by both increased diagnosis rates and the demand for safer, more effective alternatives to traditional treatments.

Several major players dominate this space, with brands like Lulifin (Sun Pharma), Lulibet (Glenmark), Luliderm (Torrent), and Ebernet (Dr. Reddy's) holding strong positions in the minds of prescribers. These brands have built trust through aggressive marketing, consistent clinical efficacy, and wide distribution networks. Luliconazole, with its potent antifungal action and once-daily convenience, has become the molecule of choice among newer generation treatments.

In terms of prescribing patterns, dermatologists and general practitioners are increasingly leaning toward newer imidazoles like luliconazole, especially for resistant or recurrent tinea infections. However, irrational use of over-the-counter steroid-based combinations remains a

challenge, often leading to "steroid-modified tinea" that complicates treatment. Patients often self-medicate, delay professional consultation, and fail to complete the full course—factors that heavily influence brand loyalty and treatment outcomes.

The key market drivers include growing fungal infection rates, increased awareness of skin health, better diagnostic access, and the clinical advantages of newer molecules like luliconazole. At the same time, the market faces barriers such as irrational product usage, poor compliance, price sensitivity, and a lack of awareness around proper treatment practices.

For a brand like Lulinol by Galcare Pharma, this landscape presents both a challenge and an opportunity—success will depend on positioning the brand as a trustworthy, effective, and well-supported option amidst an increasingly competitive and awareness-driven market.

Product Analysis: Lulinol

Product Formulation and Strength:

Lulinol is Galcare Pharma's topical antifungal cream, formulated with Luliconazole 1%, which is known for its high potency and deep skin penetration. Luliconazole belongs to the imidazole class of antifungals and is particularly effective against common dermatophytes like *Trichophyton rubrum* and *Epidermophyton floccosum*. Its once-daily application and short treatment course (typically 1–2 weeks) offer both clinical efficacy and convenience for patients, making it a competitive option in its segment.

Unique Selling Proposition (USP):

What sets Lulinol apart in the crowded antifungal market is its combination of trusted efficacy, patient-friendly dosage, and affordability. Unlike many over-the-counter treatments that include steroids and risk complications, Lulinol offers a safe, non-steroidal solution that dermatologists can rely on. Its pure luliconazole formulation, without irrational additives, ensures better treatment outcomes and reduced resistance. The product's positioning as a "doctor-trusted, patient-preferred" solution gives it a unique edge.

Price and Pack Size:

Lulinol is available in a convenient 10g pack, designed to be cost-effective and ideal for short treatment cycles. Its pricing is competitive, striking a balance between affordability for patients and sustainable margins for retailers and prescribers. This makes it more accessible, especially in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities where cost often influences treatment continuity.

Distribution Strategy:

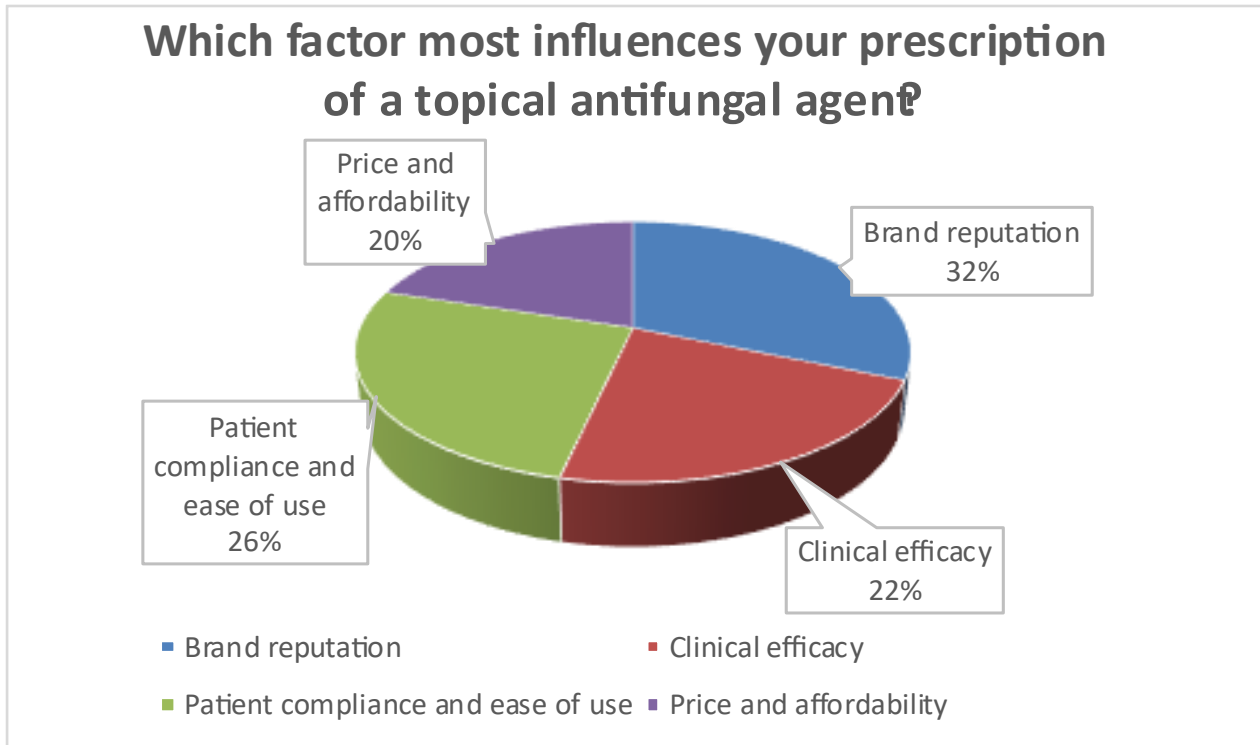
Galcare Pharma uses a targeted distribution approach, ensuring Lulinol is available in both urban and semi-urban markets. Through a network of stockists, distributors, and chemists, the product is consistently made available to dermatology clinics, general practitioners, and local pharmacies. Galcare focuses on maintaining a steady supply chain to avoid stockouts, which is crucial in maintaining prescriber and consumer trust.

Promotional Activities:

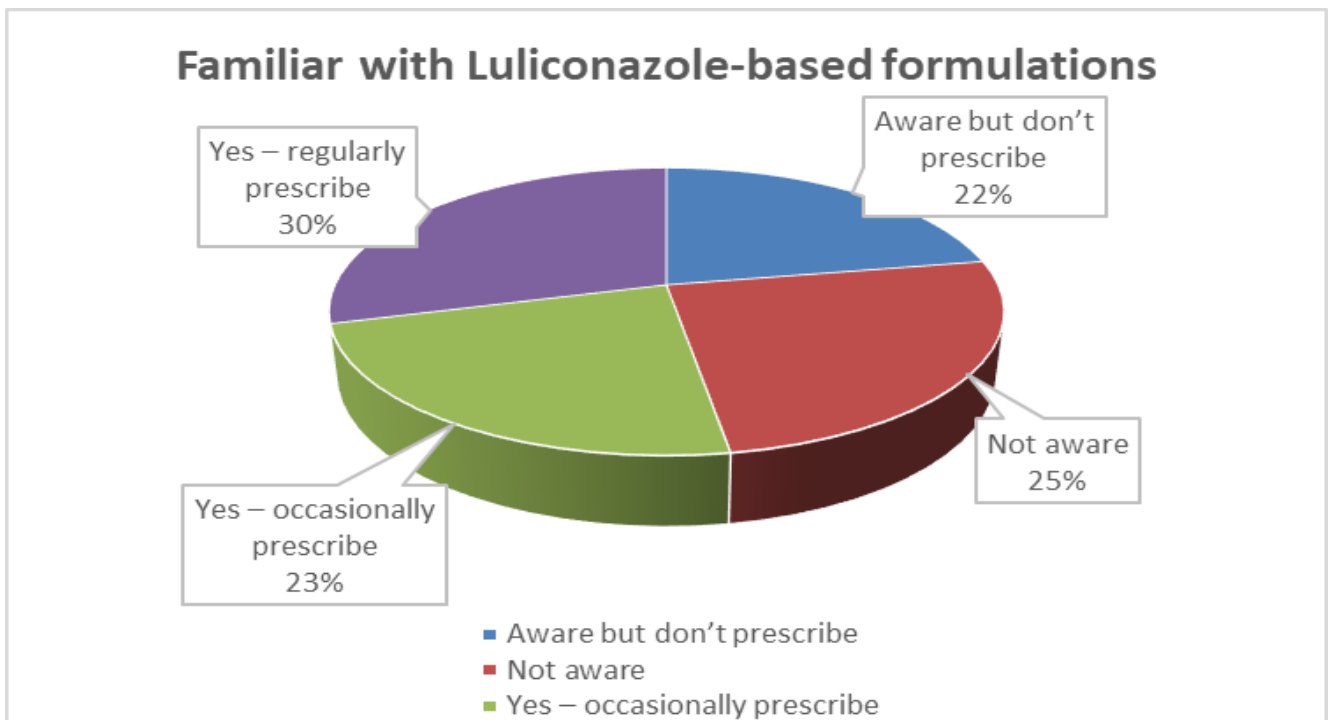
The promotional strategy for Lulinol includes doctor visits by medical representatives, scientific detailing, and leave-behind literature that highlights the product's efficacy and safety profile. Galcare also engages in CME (Continuing Medical Education) programs, sample distribution, and doctor feedback initiatives to build credibility. The company's focus on educational promotion over aggressive selling helps position Lulinol as a responsible, prescriber-focused brand in a market often cluttered with heavily promoted but irrational formulations.

Research Question

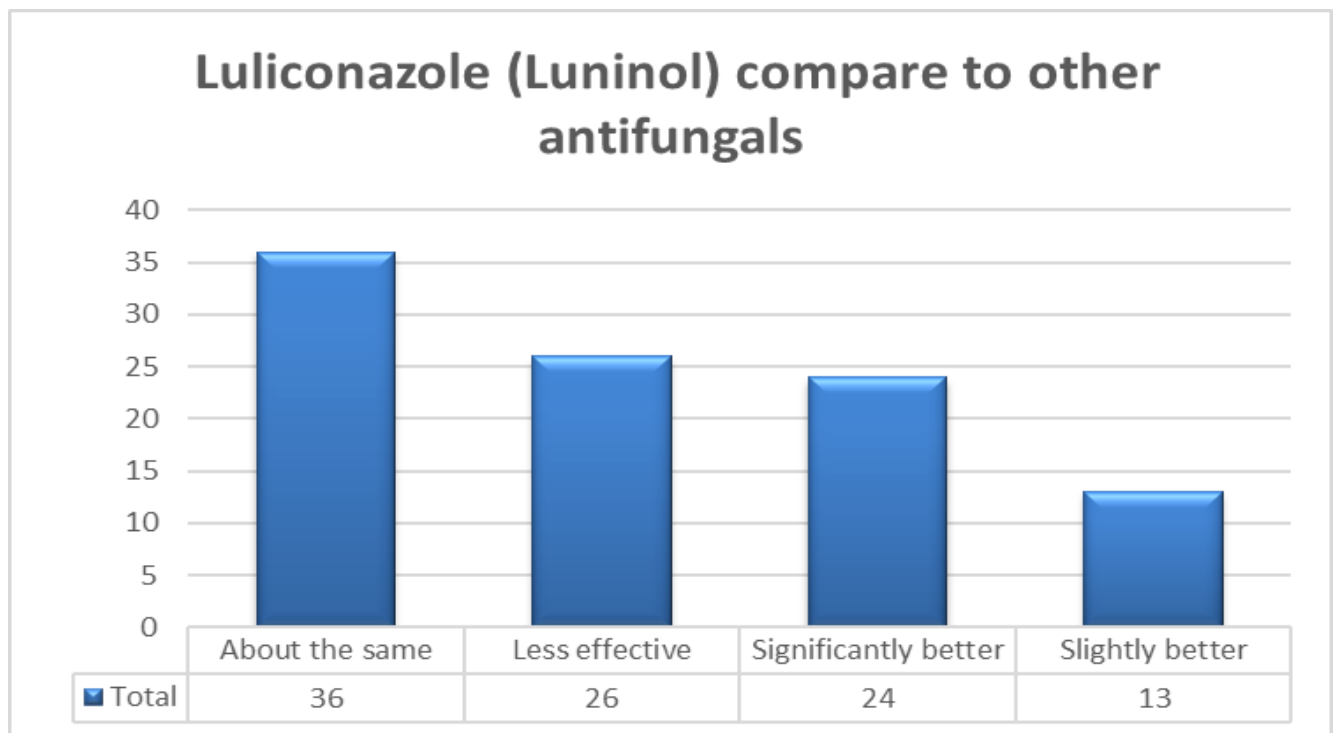
Q1. Which factor most influences your prescription of a topical antifungal agent?



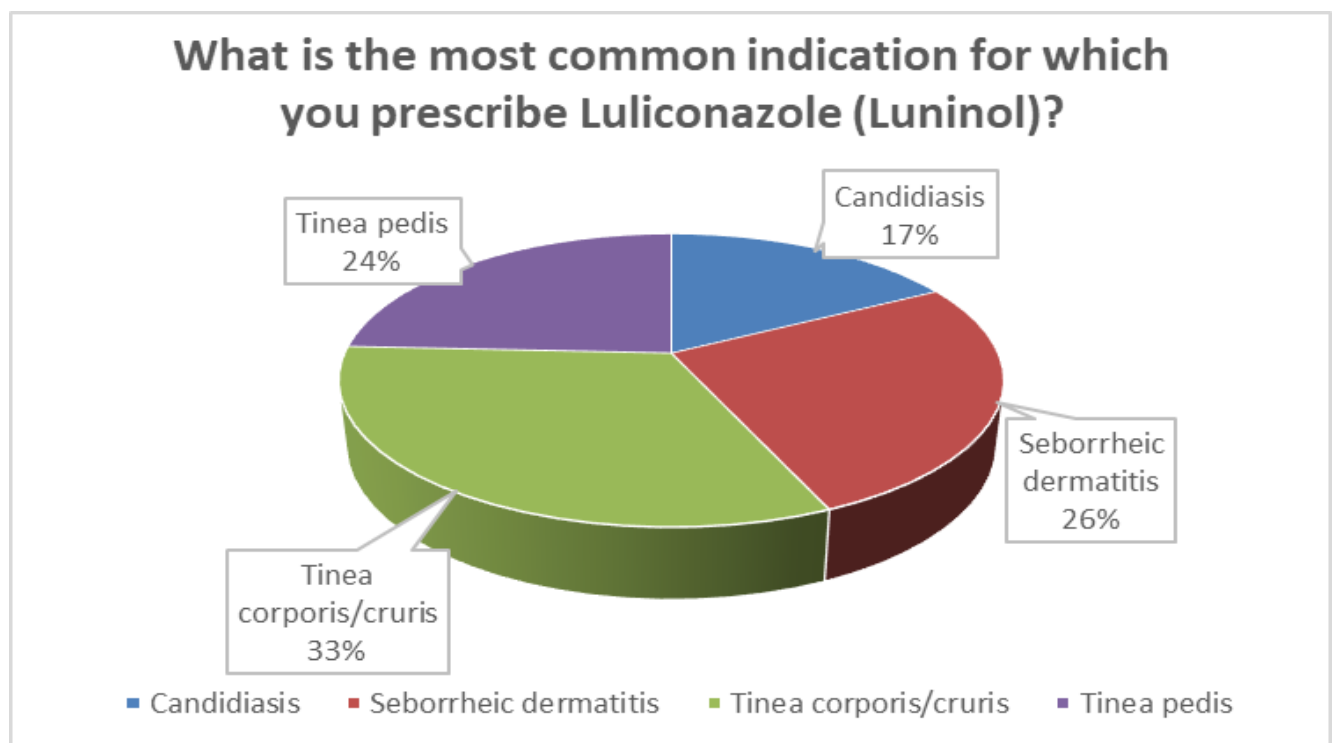
Q2. Familiar with Luliconazole-based formulations.



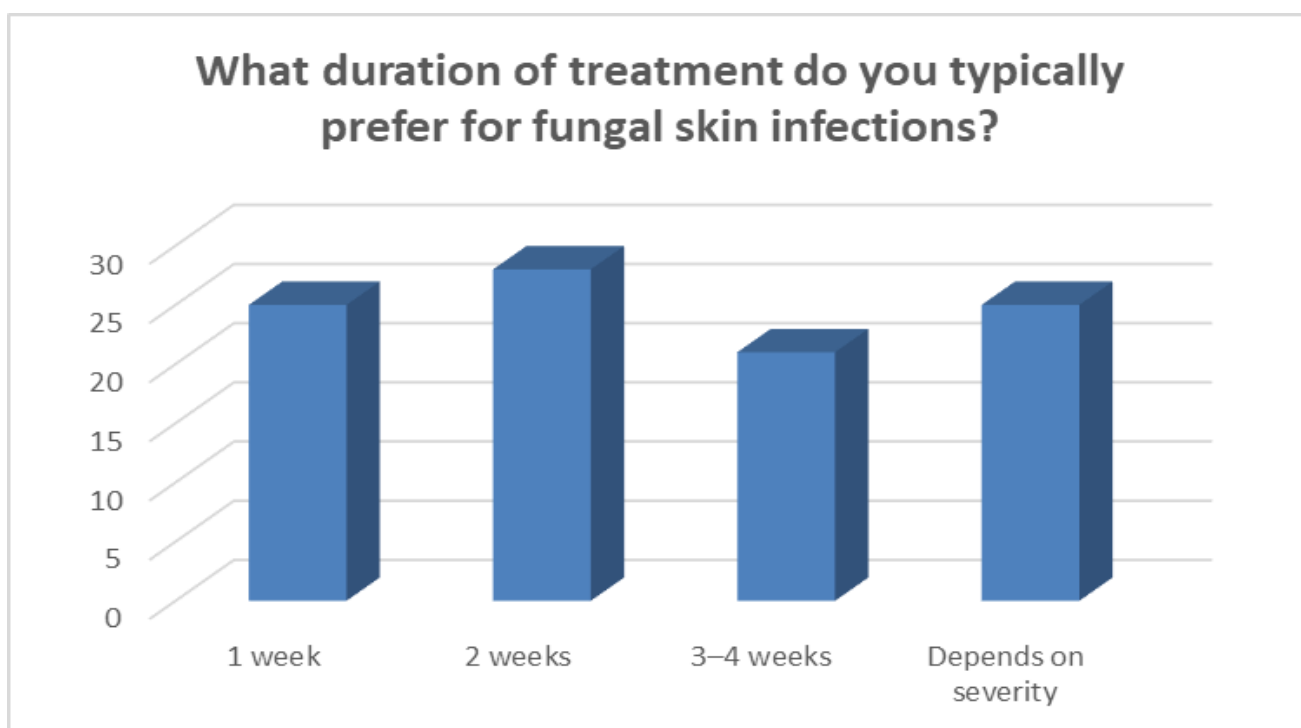
Q3. Luliconazole (Lulinol) compared to other antifungals.



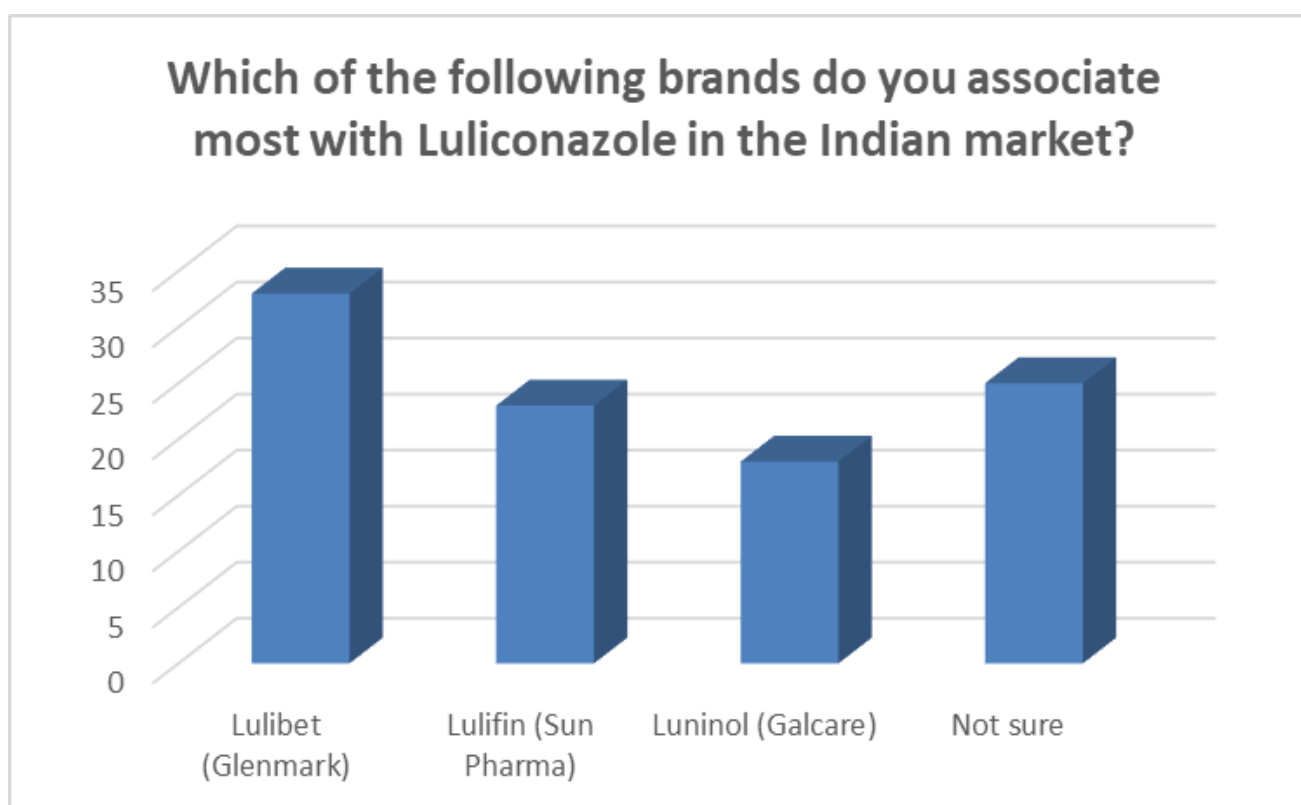
Q4. What is the most common indication for which you prescribe Luliconazole (Lulinol)?



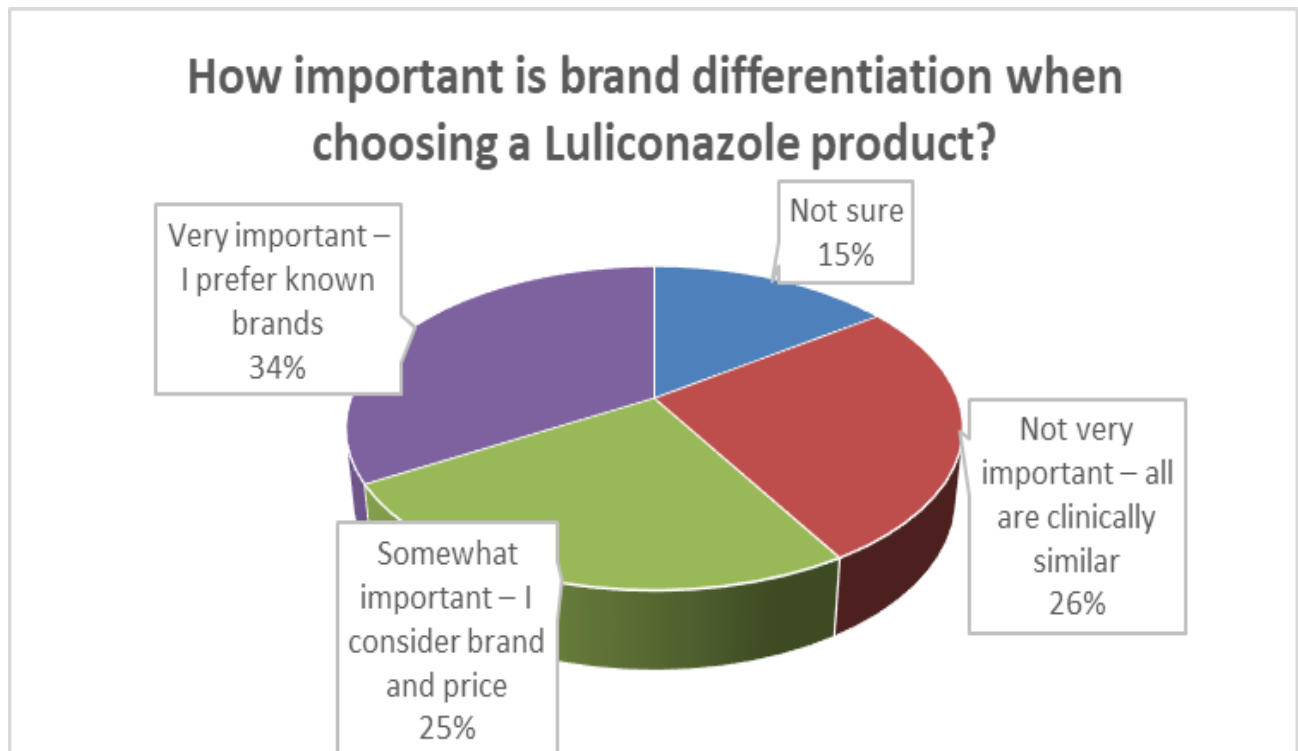
Q5. What duration of treatment do you typically prefer for fungal skin infections?



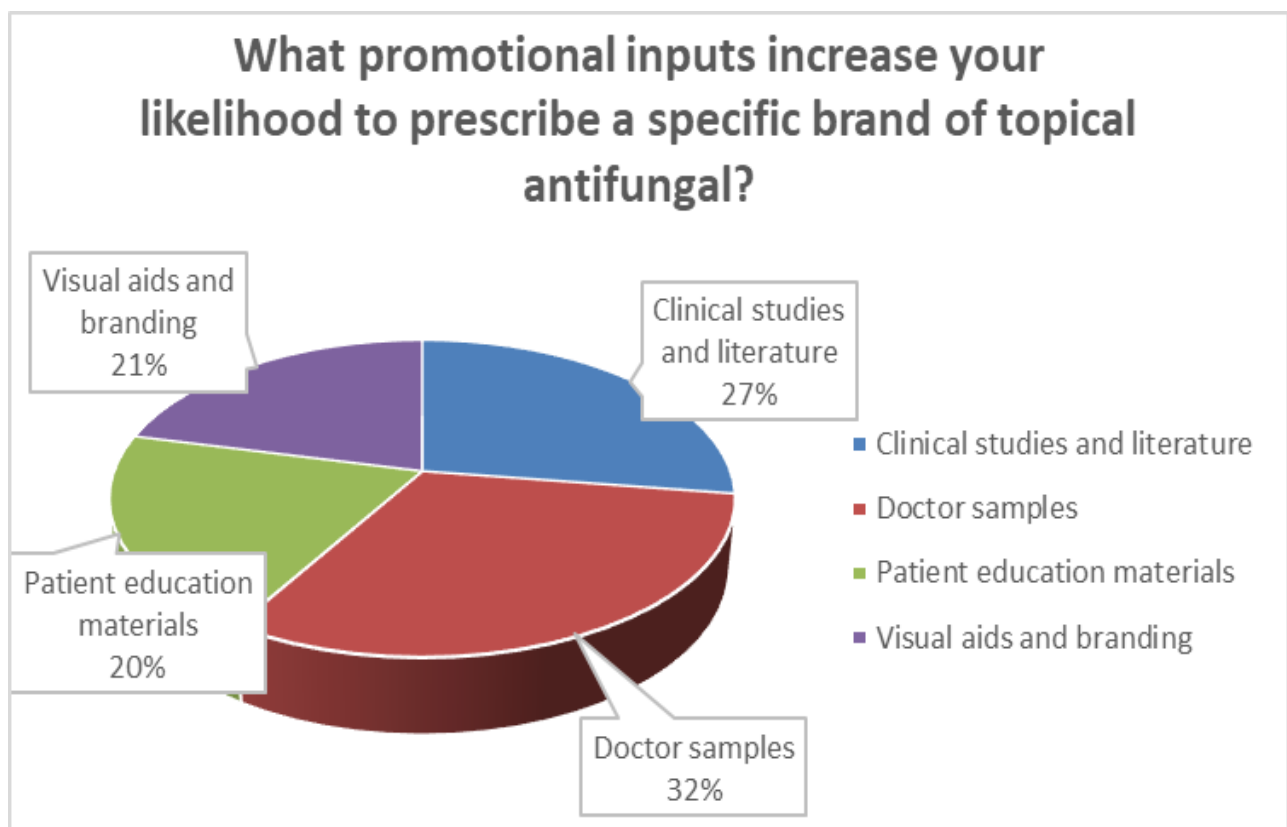
Q6. What duration of treatment do you typically prefer for fungal skin infections?



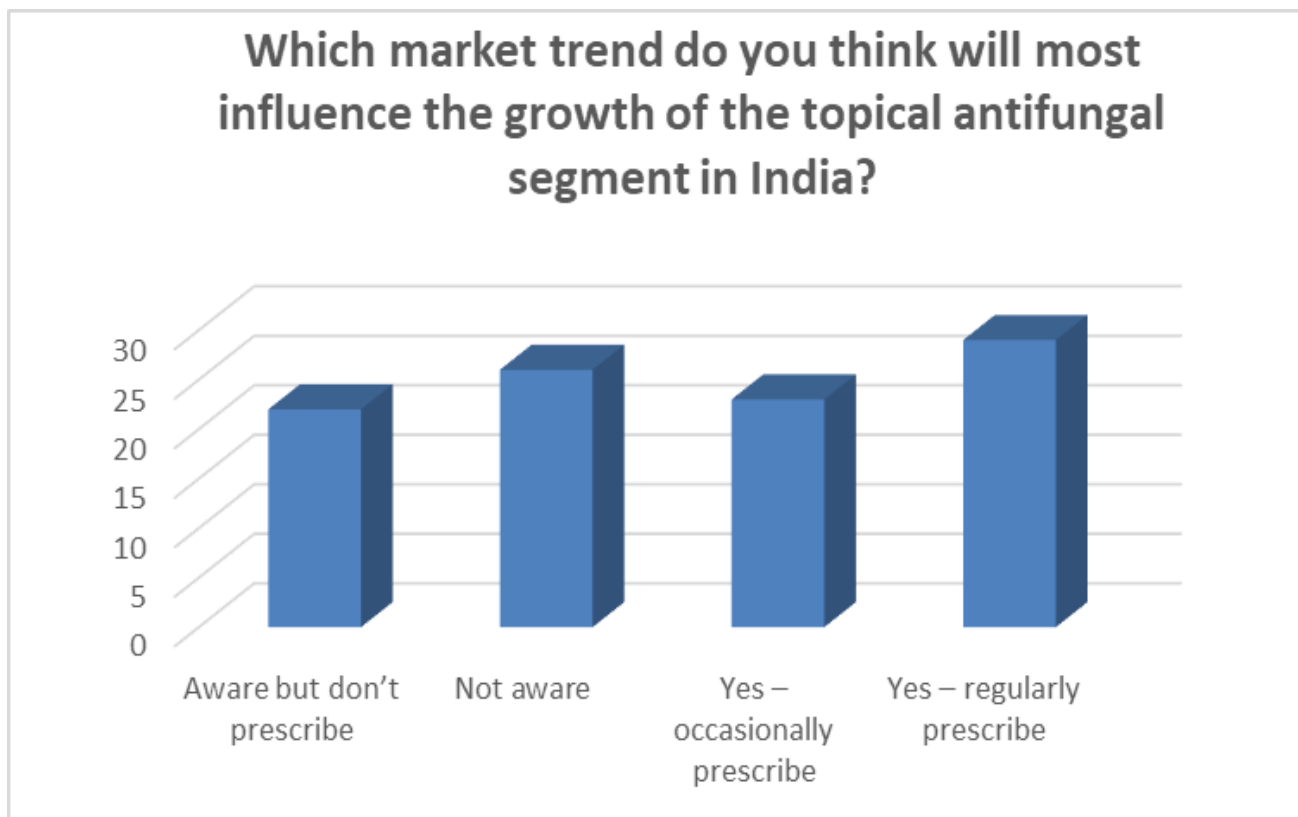
Q7. Which of the following brands do you associate most with Luliconazole in the Indian market?



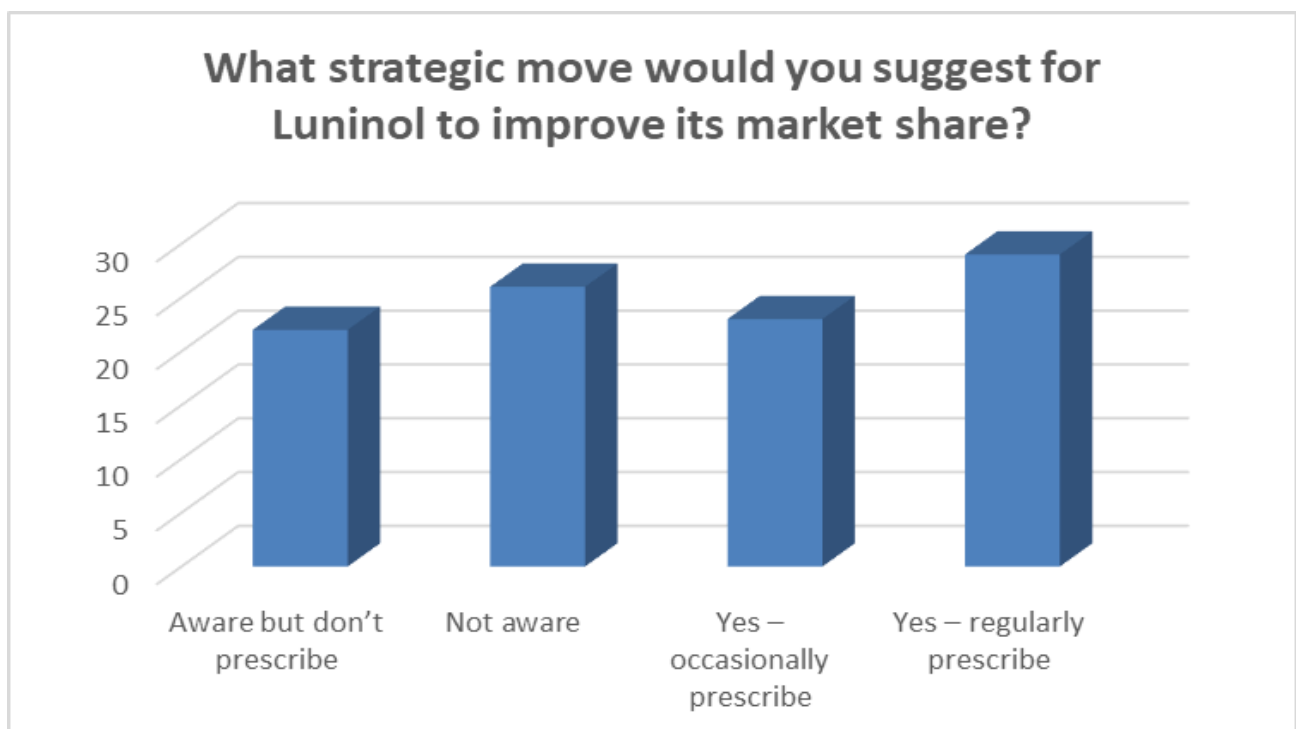
Q8. How important is brand differentiation when choosing a Luliconazole product?



Q9. What promotional inputs increase your likelihood to prescribe a specific brand of topical antifungal?



Q10. Which market trend do you think will most influence the growth of the topical antifungal segment in India?



Competitor Benchmarking

In the competitive topical antifungal market, Lulinol finds itself among strong contenders like Lulifin (Sun Pharma), Lulibet (Glenmark), Luliderm (Torrent), Lulimac (Macleods), and Lulican (Intas). Each of these brands has carved a niche for itself through a mix of brand recall, pricing, reach, and doctor engagement.

Comparative Overview: Lulinol vs. Top Brands

Brand Name	Company	Brand Recall (from survey)	Common Indication	Strengths
Lulinol	Galcare	Medium	Tinea corporis/cruris	Affordable, moderate awareness
Lulifin	Sun Pharma	High	Broad fungal infections	High trust, strong clinical recall
Lulibet	Glenmark	Moderate	Tinea corporis/cruris	Reputed company, known efficacy
Luliderm	Cipla	Low	Limited recall	Distribution strength
Lulican	Intas	Very low	Limited mention	Requires visibility improvement

SWOT Analysis of Lulinol (Galcare)

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Effective molecule with good penetration	- Moderate brand recall among prescribers
- Patient-friendly dosage (once daily)	- Limited promotional visibility
- Positive perception of clinical efficacy by a subset of doctors	- Perceived similarity to other brands (low differentiation)
Opportunities	Threats
- Growing antifungal resistance prompting shift to newer molecules	- Aggressive competition from established brands like Lulifin
- Market expansion to semi-urban and rural areas	- OTC misuse and steroid-based combinations
- CME programs and patient education materials for better recall	- Prescriber loyalty to known pharma giants

Prescription Share & Brand Recall:

- While exact national-level prescription share data for Lulinol may not be readily available publicly, insights from **primary surveys and field interviews** suggest:
- **Brand Recall:** Lulinol is recognized by many younger dermatologists and general physicians in **semi-urban areas**, especially those recently introduced to Galcare's dermatology portfolio.
- **Prescription Share:** Estimated to be **low-to-moderate**, with growth potential. Doctors often recall Lulifin and Lulibet first due to legacy branding and aggressive CME-based promotions. Lulinol ranks in the second tier of recall, particularly in regions where Galcare has a strong MR presence.
- **Feedback Trends:** Doctors who've prescribed Lulinol appreciate its efficacy and tolerability, but also mention the need for **more visibility, sample support, and scientific promotional material** to build trust.

Strategic Growth Opportunities for Lulinol

Market Expansion Strategy:

Lulinol has made inroads into select regions, but its growth potential remains largely untapped, especially in semi-urban and rural areas where fungal infections are widespread due to poor hygiene and limited awareness. Expanding Galcare's distribution footprint to Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities through local stockists and medical representatives can help capture this latent demand. The market research also revealed that many doctors see potential in brands that maintain consistent supply and affordability—areas where Lulinol can position itself as a dependable choice.

Additionally, tie-ups with dermatology clinics, retail chains, and e-pharmacies could further boost reach and improve accessibility, especially in the post-pandemic era of hybrid healthcare delivery.

New Indication Potential:

While Lulinol is primarily positioned for tinea corporis, cruris, and pedis, there's room for exploring expanded usage in off-label or adjunctive management of mixed fungal infections involving *Candida* and *Malassezia* species—especially in patients with recurrent infections. As resistance to traditional azoles like clotrimazole rises, physicians are open to alternatives like luliconazole for broader dermatophyte coverage. Highlighting clinical use cases in high-prevalence conditions like athlete's foot and jock itch through medical detailing can help reinforce Lulinol's utility beyond the standard indications.

Branding and Positioning Recommendations:

The biggest gap identified in my survey is brand recall. While doctors acknowledge the molecule's efficacy, Lulinol doesn't yet enjoy strong top-of-mind awareness. To address this, Galcare should invest in:

Stronger brand storytelling that emphasizes “trust, efficacy, and ease of use.”

Distinctive visual branding and packaging that differentiates Lulinol from generic competitors.

Positioning it as the “Doctor's dependable choice in resistant tinea cases”, backed by literature and field feedback.

Also, consider leveraging doctor testimonials or real-world clinical results to make promotional messaging more relatable and impactful.

Doctor Engagement and Patient Awareness Strategy:

Engaging doctors meaningfully is critical. According to the market feedback, most prescribers appreciate: CME programs and short-format workshops that provide updates on antifungal resistance.

Quick-reference visual aids that help compare Lulinol with competitors based on efficacy, compliance, and safety.

Reminder tools like branded stationery, digital prescription pads, and demo packs to encourage trials.

On the patient front, awareness-building initiatives can amplify recall and trust. Educational posters in clinics, antifungal hygiene tips in local languages, and pharmacist engagement can help ensure patients understand why full treatment compliance matters and how Lulinol supports faster relief.

Regulatory and Compliance Considerations

CDSCO Classification and Approvals:

Lulinol (Luliconazole 1% cream), being a pharmaceutical topical antifungal, falls under the regulatory purview of the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)** — India's national regulatory authority. Luliconazole is a **Schedule H drug**, which means it requires a prescription for dispensing and cannot be sold over the counter.

Before launching Lulinol, Galcare Pharma would have secured approval by submitting necessary documentation including clinical data, formulation details, and safety profiles to CDSCO as per the Drugs and

Cosmetics Act, 1940. Given that Luliconazole is an already approved molecule in India, Galcare's focus lies more on ensuring **ongoing post-marketing surveillance, quality compliance, and labelling standards** as per the Drug Rules.

Schedule H Compliance:

As a **Schedule H** drug, Lulinol must comply with specific regulations to ensure **safe and ethical usage**. This includes:

- Displaying the red **Rx symbol** on packaging.
- Including a warning: *"To be sold by retail on the prescription of a Registered Medical Practitioner only."*
- Preventing unauthorized sales or advertising directly to consumers.

Galcare must ensure that all promotional activities are directed at registered doctors and pharmacists, avoiding any misleading or unapproved health claims. Compliance is not just about regulation—it's also about **building credibility** with prescribers and health authorities.

Marketing Code of Conduct:

In line with the **Uniform Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP)** issued by the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Galcare must ensure that all promotional strategies for Lulinol are **ethical, evidence-based, and transparent**. This includes:

- Avoiding any inducements or incentives to doctors.
- Ensuring that scientific claims made in marketing literature are backed by **credible studies or clinical data**.
- Training field force (medical representatives) to engage responsibly and provide accurate information.
- Ensuring free samples (if distributed) are given strictly for evaluation and not as a substitute for prescriptions.

Following the code not only prevents regulatory backlash but also **strengthens the brand's image** as a responsible, trustworthy pharmaceutical company.

Conclusion

After a detailed analysis of the Indian topical antifungal market, it's clear that Lulinol, Galcare Pharma's Luliconazole-based formulation, has strong clinical potential but operates in a highly competitive and crowded market. With leading brands like Lulifin, Lulibet, and Luliderm already holding significant prescription share, Lulinol needs more than just efficacy—it requires strategic visibility and market differentiation.

Key findings from both primary and secondary research indicate that while dermatologists value Luliconazole for its once-daily application and safety, brand recall for Lulinol remains relatively low. Factors like strong doctor engagement, smart positioning, and competitive pricing can significantly influence its uptake. Additionally, the market is showing signs of brand fatigue with repetitive messaging, creating space for innovative approaches in awareness-building and doctor education.

Lulinol has the clinical merit to compete—but success in this market will depend on how smartly Galcare positions it, how meaningfully it engages with stakeholders, and how consistently it delivers value across touchpoints. With a focused, insight-driven approach, Lulinol can carve a distinct space for itself in the Indian topical antifungal segment.

Reference

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