

## Self-Care Prescribing Guidance

## Background and Purpose

- This guideline aims to encourage patients to self-care, when treatments are available to purchase over the counter and/or considered to be medicines of limited clinical value
- If this guideline is followed it will result in:
  - Increase in availability of consultations for more complex conditions
  - Increased patient self-reliance for minor conditions
  - Reduced patient reliance on prescribers for prescriptions
  - Reduced consultations for minor, self-limiting conditions
- **Note: the decision to prescribe remains with the individual prescriber as there will be circumstances when it may be appropriate to prescribe these medicines**

The following list of medicines are freely available to purchase over the counter or considered to have a limited clinical value.

External Medicines	Notes
<b>Emollients/shampoos</b>	Prescribe only for dermatitis, eczema and psoriasis Products available to purchase over the counter for dry skin
<b>Bath additives</b>	These should not be prescribed due to a lack of supporting evidence and the increased risk of slips/falls
<b>Head lice treatment</b>	Wet combing is recommended Lotions/shampoos and combs available to purchase over the counter
<b>Barrier creams</b>	Available to purchase over the counter for nappy rash
<b>Calamine lotion</b>	Available to purchase over the counter for chicken pox or sunburn
<b>Sun creams</b>	Only prescribe for photodermatoses as per ACBS guidelines
<b>Antiperspirants</b>	Prescribe only for disabling <b>palmar</b> hyperhidrosis, available to purchase over the counter for other conditions
<b>Mild acne treatment</b>	A wide range of topical products are available to purchase over the counter
<b>Antifungal skin creams and powders</b>	Available to purchase over the counter
<b>Analgesic creams/gels</b>	Available to purchase over the counter
<b>Cold sore treatments</b>	Available to purchase over the counter
<b>Treatment for bites and stings</b>	Only prescribe for known allergies to bites and stings, and for children under 1 *
<b>Warts and verrucae</b>	Only prescribe for sexual health/GUM indications and diabetes
Eye, ear, nose and throat	Notes
<b>Uncomplicated conjunctivitis</b>	Only prescribe in children under 2 *
<b>Decongestant nasal sprays</b>	Discourage long term use as can lead to rebound symptoms
<b>Lozenges/oral sprays/mouthwash/teething gels</b>	Available to purchase over the counter
<b>Ear wax drops</b>	Advise patients olive oil and ear wax drops are available to purchase over the counter
<b>Toothpaste and Gingivitis Treatments</b>	Refer patient to their dentist or advise products are available to purchase over the counter
<b>Nasal steroid sprays (hayfever)</b>	Only prescribe nasal steroids to patients under 18 *

\* due to licensing restrictions for over the counter product sales

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Internal medicines	Notes
<b>Painkillers for adults: paracetamol, aspirin 300mg, ibuprofen and co-codamol 8/500mg</b>	Acute supplies should not be prescribed If long-term treatment is required, prescribe as ordinary tablets rather than soluble due to increased sodium content Liquid only if swallowing assessment completed
<b>Painkillers for children: Paracetamol/Ibuprofen suspension (Calpol®/Nurofen®)</b>	Encourage parents to buy and stock these in their medicines cupboard
<b>Cough mixtures</b>	No clinical evidence for the use of expectorants and demulcents Avoid prescribing pholcodine and codeine linctus due to the potential for dependence
<b>Anti-diarrhoeals</b>	Prescribe for chronic bowel conditions only Available to purchase over the counter for acute episodes if required
<b>Laxatives</b>	Available to purchase over the counter for acute use in healthy, non-pregnant patients who are not taking opiates and do not have complications of their constipation
<b>Travel medicines</b>	Travel medicine is not an NHS provision – self-care and purchase is recommended
<b>Colic treatment</b>	Infacol is available to purchase over the counter for colic Colief is available to purchase for lactose intolerance
<b>Vitamin supplements and tonics</b>	Only prescribe for alcohol excess (thiamine and vitamin B), proven vitamin D deficiency, BMI <18, and for specific medical conditions e.g. gastric surgery, short bowel
<b>Iron tablets</b>	If haemoglobin is normal but ferritin low, offer lifestyle advice and patients can purchase over the counter supplements
<b>Hay fever preparations</b>	Only prescribe antihistamines for chronic rhinitis and urticaria, and for children under 6 Only prescribe nasal steroids to patients under 18yrs *
<b>Threadworm tablets</b>	Available to purchase over the counter Only prescribe for children aged 6 months – 2 years *
<b>Indigestion remedies</b>	Available to purchase over the counter
<b>Folic acid and vitamin supplements for pregnancy</b>	400mcg dose available to purchase over the counter Only prescribe 5mg if clinically required

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Other	Notes
<b>Obesity management</b>	Sign post patients to <a href="#">weight management programme</a> deliver by WHG community health officer's and community pharmacists
<b>Smoking cessation</b>	Refer patient to Smoking Cessation Advisors
<b>Tubigrip bandages</b>	Inexpensive to buy over the counter

The recommendations in this document should not replace clinical judgement

Prescribers will need to make a clinical decision whether or not to prescribe these products on an individual patient basis