

Appendix 1 - Conditions for which prescribing should be restricted

Full guidance can be found at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/conditions-for-which-over-the-counter-items-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-guidance-for-ccgs/>

Items of limited clinical effectiveness

1. Probiotics
2. Vitamins and minerals

Self-limiting conditions

3. Acute Sore Throat
4. Cold Sores
5. Conjunctivitis
6. Coughs and Colds and Nasal Congestion
7. Cradle Cap
8. Haemorrhoids
9. Infant Colic

Minor conditions suitable for self-care

10. Mild Cystitis
11. Contact Dermatitis
12. Dandruff
13. Diarrhoea (Adults)
14. Dry Eyes/Sore (tired) eyes
15. Earwax
16. Excessive sweating (mild – moderate hyperhidrosis)
17. Head Lice
18. Indigestion and Heartburn
19. Infrequent Constipation
20. Infrequent Migraines
21. Insect bites and stings
22. Mild Acne
23. Mild Dry Skin
24. Sunburn/Sun Protection
25. Mild to Moderate Hay fever/Seasonal Rhinitis
26. Minor Burns and Scalds
27. Minor conditions associated with pain, discomfort and/fever. (e.g. aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain)
28. Mouth Ulcers
29. Nappy Rash
30. Prevention of dental caries
31. Ringworm/Athletes foot
32. Teething/Mild Toothache
33. Threadworms
34. Travel Sickness Tablets
35. Warts and Verrucae

For general exceptions, see page below.

General exceptions that apply to the recommendation to self-care

The guidance is intended to encourage people to self-care for minor illnesses as the first stage treatment. It is envisioned that in most cases (unless specified) these minor conditions will clear up with appropriate self-care. If symptoms are not improving or responding to treatment, then patients should be encouraged to seek further advice.

The guidance is not intended to discourage patients from going to the GP when it is appropriate to do so.

There are however, certain scenarios where patients should continue to have their treatments prescribed and these are outlined below:

- Patients prescribed an OTC treatment for a long term condition (e.g. regular pain relief for chronic arthritis or treatments for inflammatory bowel disease).
- For the treatment of more complex forms of minor illnesses (e.g. severe migraines that are unresponsive to over the counter medicines).
- For those patients that have symptoms that suggest the condition is not minor (i.e. those with red flag symptoms for example indigestion with very bad pain.)
- Treatment for complex patients (e.g. immunosuppressed patients).
- Patients on prescription only treatments.
- Patients prescribed OTC products to treat an adverse effect or symptom of a more complex illness and/or prescription only medications should continue to have these products prescribed on the NHS.
- Circumstances where the product licence doesn't allow the product to be sold over the counter to certain groups of patients. This may vary by medicine, but could include babies, children and/or women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. Community Pharmacists will be aware of what these are and can advise accordingly.
- Patients with a minor condition suitable for self-care that has not responded sufficiently to treatment with an OTC product.
- Patients where the clinician considers that the presenting symptom is due to a condition that would not be considered a minor condition.
- Circumstances where the prescriber believes that in their clinical judgement, exceptional circumstances exist that warrant deviation from the recommendation to self-care.
- Individual patients where the clinician considers that their ability to self-manage is compromised as a consequence of medical, mental health or significant social vulnerability to the extent that their health and/or wellbeing could be adversely affected, if reliant on self-care. To note that being exempt from paying a prescription charge does not automatically warrant an exception to the guidance. Consideration should also be given to safeguarding issues.