

Promotion of Self-Care for Minor Conditions by Community Pharmacies.

A Toolkit to Assist with Advice and Over the Counter (OTC) Medicines.

What is the Guidance on the prescribing of Over the Counter (OTC) medicines?

Following public consultations NHS England published guidance to CCGs on 29th March 2018 pertaining to:

[Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs](#)

The CCG guidance lists 35 minor health conditions for which it is now recommended that OTC medicines should no longer be routinely prescribed. Vitamins, minerals and probiotics are also included in the restrictions as items of limited clinical effectiveness. It recommends that certain minor health conditions which are either “self-limiting” or suitable for “self-care” should no longer be treated by the issuing of prescriptions in primary care.

The guidance focuses on stopping routine prescribing:

- **for the management of a self-limiting condition**, which does not require any medical advice or treatment as it will clear up on its own, such as sore throats, coughs and colds;
- **for the management of a condition that is suitable for self-care**, which can be treated with items that can easily be purchased over the counter from a pharmacy, such as indigestion, mouth ulcers and warts and verrucae; and
- vitamins, minerals and probiotics as they are items **of limited clinical effectiveness**.

However, the guidance also makes clear that these restrictions do not apply to people with long-term conditions, nor should they be applied to patients who the prescriber considers unable to self-care due to medical, mental health or significant social vulnerability.

The guidance is for CCGs to support the NHS’s wider ambition to ensure greater value is achieved from the annual medicines bill, to support promotion of self-care where possible for minor conditions and highlight the alternatives to making a GP appointment or taking a medicine. CCGs will have available a policy statement on local implementation and their contacts are available on the [Community Pharmacy Surrey & Sussex website](#). To find out which CCG area your pharmacy is in click [here](#).

Further information is available on the [NHS England website](#). Including a quick reference [Frequently asked Questions](#).

Prescribers will, however, still need to use their clinical discretion and judgement when deciding whether to prescribe these medicines and their own professional contractual responsibilities ([see GPC and BMA guidance](#)).

Conditions for which OTC items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care:

Items of low clinical effectiveness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Probiotics 2. Vitamins and minerals
Self-limiting conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Acute Sore throat 4. Infrequent Cold Sores of the lip 5. Conjunctivitis 6. Coughs and colds and nasal congestion 7. Cradle Cap (Seborrhoeic dermatitis –infants) 8. Haemorrhoids 9. Infant colic 10. Mild Cystitis
Minor illnesses suitable for self-care	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Mild Irritant dermatitis 12. Dandruff 13. Diarrhoea (Adults) 14. Dry Eyes/Sore tired Eyes 15. Earwax 16. Excessive sweating (Hyperhidrosis) 17. Headlice 18. Indigestion and Heartburn 19. Infrequent constipation 20. Infrequent Migraine 21. Insect bites and stings 22. Mild Acne 23. Mild Dry Skin 24. Sunburn 25. Sun protection 26. Mild to Moderate Hay fever/Allergic Rhinitis 27. Minor burns and scalds 28. Minor conditions associated with pain discomfort and/fever. (E.g. aches and sprains, headache, period, back pain) 29. Mouth ulcers 30. Nappy Rash 31. Oral Thrush 32. Prevention of dental caries 33. Ringworm/Athletes foot 34. Teething/Mild toothache 35. Threadworm 36. Travel Sickness 37. Warts and verrucae.

An opportunity for Community Pharmacy.

For community pharmacy this presents an opportunity to build relationships with GPs and enhance its existing role in educating patients to help them to self-care.

Hence, the following information is to support community pharmacies in having conversations with patients, local GP and CCG colleagues.

1. NHS England have produced patient information documents (including an easy read version) to support discussions between patients and healthcare professionals which can be found [here](#) These list the [conditions to which the guidance applies and the exceptions](#).
2. Use local resources produced by your CCG medicine management team or the NHS England [one page patient information sheet](#) to support discussions and referrals between healthcare professionals and community pharmacies.
3. Please refer to the manufacturer's product/package leaflets for information regarding licensed indications for OTC medicines. [The electronic Medicines Compendium \(eMC\)](#) contains up to date, easily accessible information about medicines licensed for use in the UK.

How can community pharmacies support people to Self-Care for Minor Conditions via Community Pharmacy?

- Display and use posters and leaflets available from your CCG or NHS England as appropriate for your pharmacy.
- Make sure your that all your pharmacy staff are aware of the new guidance.
- Avoid referring any person to their GP for the sole purpose of obtaining a prescription for an item OTC as people who don't pay for their prescriptions are not exempt from self-care.
- Consider stocking cost effective medicines for self-care such as generic formulations to help increase affordability for more people.

Training and resources available to community pharmacy staff to help the pharmacy team support people to Self-Care for Minor Conditions via Community Pharmacy.

1. [NHS UK](#) contains a Health A-Z section which is a complete guide to conditions, symptoms and treatment.
2. [The Self Care Forum](#) contains fact sheets for common ailments aimed to help clinicians and patients discuss issues around self-care. When to seek further help (red flags) are included.
3. [CPPE resources that support minor ailments and self-care](#)

For learning resources on minor ailments and self-care visit the **CPPE minor ailments gateway page**;

<https://www.cppe.ac.uk/gateway/minor>

Learning resources available include;

Common clinical conditions and minor ailments, distance learning

<https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes/l/respmin-p-03/>

This programme will help to update your knowledge and skills on the common clinical conditions and minor ailments that present themselves in community pharmacy. It contains practical tips and advice on how to identify, recognise and manage minor ailments.

On completion of all aspects of this learning programme you should be able to:

- identify the common minor ailments that present themselves in community pharmacy
- recognise, manage and advise on the signs and symptoms of minor ailments
- identify danger signs and symptoms, know how to manage these and when to refer patients
- offer advice, support and evidence-based over-the-counter treatment to patients with minor ailments
- know where to find relevant information and resources on minor ailments.

This learning is intended for; Pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, pre-registration trainees

Please note: this e-learning programme has been developed and provided by NHS Education for Scotland. Users should recognise that this programme will refer to Scottish policies and organisations.

An associated assessment is also available;
Minor ailments: a clinical approach

Community Pharmacy Surrey & Sussex

On behalf of East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey LPCs



<https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes//minor2-a-08>

The following external links are also available from the minor ailments gateway page;

NICE clinical knowledge summaries, which provide summaries of a wide range of conditions including common primary care presentations

Royal College of General Practitioners online learning, which provides a range of online courses for healthcare professionals

PrescQIPP self care webkit, which provides tools to encourage people to self-care

In addition **e-Learning for healthcare** learning modules, including 'Supporting self-care' can also be accessed via the CPPE website;

<https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes//leaders-e-00>

We would also recommend that all pharmacy professionals undertaking face to face consultations demonstrate competency in consultation skills and safeguarding.

For the pharmacy team **theLearningpharmacy.com** covers a range of learning topics to support self-care;

<https://www.cppe.ac.uk/programmes//tlp-e-11/>

For further advice and support from the Community Pharmacy Surrey & Sussex Team, please contact us:

Email to LPC@communitypharmacyss.co.uk

Call us on **01372 417726**

Direct Message us on Twitter [@CPSS_LPCs](https://twitter.com/CPSS_LPCs)

Or visit our website www.communitypharmacyss.co.uk