

**Guidance from NHSE on conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care. Aligning the North West London Prescribing Wisely list to the NHSE guidance**

Items/conditions on both lists, aligned to NHSE guidance	Examples for illustration purpose only	
<i>1. Items of Limited Clinical Effectiveness</i>		
Probiotics	Probiotic sachets	No exceptions have been identified
Vitamins and mineral supplements	Vitamin B compound tablets, Vitamin C effervescent 1g tablets Multivitamin preparations	Medically diagnosed deficiency, including for those patients who may have a lifelong or chronic condition or have undergone surgery that results in malabsorption. Continuing need should however be reviewed on a regular basis. <i>NB maintenance or preventative treatment is not an exception.</i> Calcium and vitamin D for osteoporosis. Malnutrition including alcoholism (see NICE guidance) <i>Patients suitable to receive Healthy start vitamins for pregnancy or children between the ages 6 months to their fourth birthday.</i>
<i>2. Self-Limiting Conditions</i>		
Acne - mild	Benzoyl peroxide products Salicylic acid products	Non-treatment can lead to mental health problems Patients should be encouraged to manage mild acne with long term use of OTC products No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Acute sore throat	Lozenges or throat sprays	Red flag symptoms
Cold sores of the lip - infrequent	Antiviral cold sore cream	No exceptions have been identified.
Conjunctivitis	Antimicrobial eye drops and eye ointment	Can only be purchased for adults or children over 2 years No exceptions have been identified.
Coughs and colds and nasal congestion	Cough mixtures or linctus, Saline nose drops, Menthol vapour rubs, Cold and flu capsules or sachets	No exceptions have been identified
Cradle Cap (seborrhoeic dermatitis – infants)	Emulsifying ointment, Shampoos	If causing distress to the infant and not improving
Cystitis - mild	Sodium bicarbonate or potassium citrate granules	No exceptions have been identified
Haemorrhoids	Haemorrhoid creams, ointments or suppositories	No exceptions have been identified
Infant Colic	Simethicone suspensions Lactase drops	NHS Choices advice: <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Colic/Pages/Introduction.aspx">http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Colic/Pages/Introduction.aspx</a>

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3. <i>Minor Conditions Suitable for Self-Care</i>		
Burns and Scalds - minor	Antiseptic Burn creams Cooling burn gel	See earlier for general exceptions. No routine exceptions have been identified. However more serious burns always require professional medical attention. Burns requiring hospital A&E treatment include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all chemical and electrical burns;</li> <li>• large or deep burns;</li> <li>• burns that cause white or charred skin;</li> <li>• burns on the face, hands, arms, feet, legs or genitals that cause blisters.</li> </ul>
Constipation - infrequent	Bisacodyl tablets 5mg Ispaghula Husk granules Lactulose solution	Pharmacists can help if diet and lifestyle changes aren't helping. They can suggest an OTC laxative. Most laxatives work within 3 days. They should only be used for a short time. Laxatives are not recommended for children unless they are prescribed by a GP. This guidance applies to short term, infrequent constipation caused by changes in lifestyle or diet such as lack of water or movement or changes in diet. No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Dermatitis – mild irritant	Emollients, Steroid creams, bath additives	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Dandruff	Antidandruff shampoos Antifungal shampoos	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Diarrhoea (adults)	Loperamide 2mg capsules Rehydration satchets	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Dry eyes/sore tired eyes	Eye drops for sore tired eyes Hypromellose 0.3% eye drops	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Dry Skin - mild	Emollient creams, ointments and lotions, bath additives	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Ear wax	Drops containing sodium bicarbonate, hydrogen peroxide, olive oil or almond oil	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Excessive sweating (hyperhidrosis)	Aluminium chloride sprays, roll-ons, solutions	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Hay Fever/Seasonal Rhinitis – mild to moderate	Antihistamine tablets or liquids Steroid nasal sprays Sodium cromoglicate eye drops	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Head Lice	Creams and lotions for head lice	Live head lice can be treated by wet combing; chemical treatment is only

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		recommended in exceptional circumstances and in these cases OTC medicine can be purchased from a pharmacy No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Indigestion and Heartburn	Antacid tablets or liquids Ranitidine 150mg tablets OTC proton pump inhibitors e.g. omeprazole 10mg capsules Sodium alginate, calcium carbonate or sodium carbonate liquids	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Infrequent Migraine	Migraine tablets Painkillers Anti-sickness tablets	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Insect bites and stings	Steroid creams or creams for itching	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Sunburn due to excessive sun exposure	After sun cream Sun creams	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Sun Protection	After sun creams Sun creams	ACBS approved indication of photodermatoses (i.e. where skin protection should be prescribed). See earlier for general exceptions*
Minor conditions associated with pain, discomfort and/fever. (e.g. aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain)	Paracetamol 500mg tablets Ibuprofen 400mg tablets NSAID topical creams or gels Paracetamol suspension	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions* Examples of conditions where patients should be encouraged to self care include: Headache, colds, fever, earache, teething, period pain, cuts, self-limiting musculoskeletal pain, sprains and strains, bruising, toothache, sinusitis/nasal congestion, recovery after a simple medical procedure, aches and pains and sore throat
Mouth ulcers	Antibacterial mouthwash	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Nappy rash	Nappy rash creams	Nappy rash usually clears up after about 3 to 7 days if recommended hygiene tips are followed. No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Oral thrush		No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Prevention of Dental Caries	Fluoride toothpastes Mouthwashes	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Ringworm/Athlete's foot	Athlete's foot cream Antifungal creams or sprays	Lymphoedema or history of lower limb cellulitis. See earlier for general exceptions*

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Teething/Mild toothache	Antiseptic pain relieving gel Clove oil Painkillers	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Threadworm	Medendazole 100mg tablets	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Travel sickness	Travel sickness tablets	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*
Wart and Verrucae	Creams, gels, skin paints and medicated plasters containing salicylic acid Dimethyl ether propane cold spray	No exceptions have been identified. See earlier for general exceptions*

#### \* 1.5 General exceptions that could apply to the recommendation to self-care

For the category of conditions identified as being appropriate for self-care, this guidance is intended to encourage people to self-care for minor illnesses as the first stage of treatment.

Clinicians should continue to prescribe taking account of NICE guidance as appropriate for the treatment of long term conditions (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) and for those patients that have symptoms that suggest the condition is not minor (i.e. those with red flag symptoms such as cough lasting longer than three weeks.)

Treatment for complex patients (e.g. immunosuppressed patients) and patients on treatments that are only available on prescription should continue to have these products prescribed on the NHS.

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.

CCGs should ensure that community pharmacists are reminded of 'red flag' symptoms for patients presenting with symptoms related to the conditions covered by this consultation. GPs and/or pharmacists should refer patients to NHS Choices, the Self Care Forum or NHS 111 for further advice on when they should seek GP Care.

Prescriptions for the conditions listed in this guidance should also continue to be issued on the NHS for:

- 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 breast-feeding. 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 ailment.
- Circumstances where the prescriber believes that in their clinical judgement, exceptional circumstances exist that warrant deviation from the recommendation to self-care.
- Patients where the clinician considers that their ability to self-manage is compromised as a consequence of social, medical or mental health vulnerability to the extent that their health and/or wellbeing could be adversely affected if left to self-care.

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. CCGs should ensure that community pharmacists are reminded of 'red flag' symptoms for patients presenting with symptoms related to the conditions covered by this consultation. GPs and/or pharmacists should refer patients to NHS Choices, the Self Care Forum or NHS 111 for further advice on when they should seek GP Care.

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