

Sheffield Self-care Guidance

Guidance on conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care.

This has been produced to support the implementation of NHSE guidance on conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care. It is intended to encourage people to self-care for minor illnesses as the first stage of 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. This guidance applies to all patients, including those who would be exempt from paying prescription charges, unless they fall under the [exceptions](#) outlined below or within the table under each monograph.

In the 12 months prior to June 2017, the NHS Sheffield spent approximately £2.7 million on prescriptions for medicines, which could otherwise be purchased over the counter (OTC) from a pharmacy and/or other outlets such as petrol stations or supermarkets.

These prescriptions include items for a condition:

- That is considered to be self-limiting and so does not need treatment as it will heal or be cured of its own accord;
- Which lends itself to self-care i.e. the person suffering does not normally need to seek medical advice and can manage the condition by purchasing OTC items directly.

These prescriptions also include other common items:

- That can be purchased over the counter, sometimes at a lower cost than that which would be incurred by the NHS;
- For which there is little evidence of clinical effectiveness.

A wide range of information is available to the public on the subjects of health promotion and the management of minor self- treatable

illnesses. Advice from organisations such as the [Self Care Forum](#) and [NHS.uk](#) website is readily available on the internet. Many community pharmacies are also open extended hours, including weekends, and are ideally placed to offer advice on the management of minor conditions and lifestyle interventions. See [link](#) to Sheffield pharmacies and their respective opening hours. The Royal Pharmaceutical Society offers advice on over the counter [products that should be kept in a medicine cabinet](#) at home to help patients treat a range of self-treatable illnesses, also see [appendix 1](#). Where safe to do so, patients should be encouraged to keep these items in their medicines cabinet.

The tables on the following pages list the conditions where self-care with over the counter preparations is recommended, the table includes: exceptions when prescribing may be indicated; examples of preparations; circumstances where the presenting condition is not legally covered by the OTC licence and links to self-care leaflets and advice. To return to the Index 'Control Click' the blue arrow 

Exceptions

Specific exceptions are included (if applicable) under the relevant item and/or condition in the tables below.

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

***General exceptions:**

- 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 breast-feeding. Community pharmacists will be aware of these 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.

* These general exceptions do not apply to; vitamins, minerals, probiotics and those self-limiting conditions where there is limited evidence of clinical effectiveness for the treatments used (e.g. OTC items for cough, sore throat and infant colic). However also see exceptions within each monograph.

Suggested action for prescribers

New patients

- If a patient presents with a condition that can be managed with an over the counter preparations and / or self-care, sign post the patient to a pharmacy who will be able to offer advice and recommend a suitable preparation (see [appendix 2](#) or individual monographs for patient information and '[no prescription required](#)' forms).
- Promote the self-care websites ([NHS.uk](#) website, [Self-Care Forum](#)) and the clinical expertise of community pharmacies in supporting management of minor ailments and self-limiting conditions.

Consider using NHSE leaflet ([appendix 2](#)) to explain the changes in over the counter medicine supply and why OTC is now recommended.

Existing patients

Review all patients prescribed a medicine for a condition in the list below. Determine whether to:

- Stop prescribing the medicine and provide the patient with advice on self-care or non-drug alternatives. For items available to purchase over-the-counter (OTC), recommend self-care and purchase of the medicine OTC with support and advice from the community pharmacist wherever appropriate (note some preparations will only be available through community pharmacies – 'P' medicines).
- If it is appropriate in exceptional circumstances to continue treatment, ensure that the patient is assessed and reviewed as appropriate.

Consider using patient and professional resources ([appendix 2](#) and individual monographs and '[no prescription required](#)' forms) to explain the changes in over the counter medicine supply and why OTC is now recommended.

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Items or Condition for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care.	Exceptions where prescribing may be appropriate (also see page 2).	Examples of medicines able to purchase (<i>Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only</i>)	Circumstances where there are *Over the Counter restrictions Known allergy for all.	Useful patient resources. Also see NHS.UK or Self-care forum
Items of limited clinical effectiveness				
Probiotics 	All probiotics are classed as food supplements	Probiotic sachets	None known	Resources Link
Vitamins and minerals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 CG115) Patients suitable to receive Healthy start vitamins for pregnancy or children between the ages 6 months to their fourth birthday. (NB this is not on prescription but commissioned separately) – Refer patients to their nearest children’s centre. For more information on the Sheffield extended Healthy Start scheme - see link 	Vitamin D (nb. Not the high strength preparations used to treat deficiency), Vitamin B compound tablets, Vitamin C effervescent 1g tablets, Multivitamin preparations	Many are food supplements so limited information available. Vitamin D 800 capsules – hypervitaminosis D, nephrolithiasis, diseases or conditions resulting in hypercalcaemia and/or hypercalciuria, severe renal impairment	Resources Link

Self-Limiting Conditions

Condition	Exceptions	Examples (Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only)	Over the Counter restrictions*	Patient Resources
Acute Sore Throat 	Red Flag symptoms	Benzydamine for example as Difflam® Spray and Difflam® Oral Rinse Lozenges for example Strepsils®, Throaties® and Tyrozets® Throat sprays for example Ultra Chloraseptic®	All preparations - pregnancy or breastfeeding Benzydamine - children under 12 years - oral rinse shouldn't be used. Lozenges - diabetes, children under 6 years, fructose intolerance, glucose-galactose malabsorption or sucrose-isomaltose insufficiency. Throat Sprays - children under 6 years, epiglottitis or methaemoglobinaemia.	Resources Also see Resources
Infrequent cold sores of the lip 	Immunocompromised patients. Red Flag symptoms	Antiviral cold sore cream (aciclovir 5% cream)	Immunocompromised patients Terminally ill patients Only for treatment on face and lips	Resources
Conjunctivitis 	Red Flag symptoms	Antimicrobial eye drops and eye ointment (chloramphenicol ointment and drops).	Children under 2 years Pregnancy Breastfeeding	Resources
Coughs and colds and nasal congestion 	Red Flag symptoms	Cough mixtures or linctus Saline nose drops, Menthol vapour rubs, Cold and flu capsules or sachets. Analgesics Pseudoephedrine	Ibuprofen - long term conditions requiring regular pain relief, asthma, unstable high blood pressure, taking anticoagulants, stomach ulcer, perforation or bleeding (active or history of), renal, hepatic or cardiac impairment, pregnancy, breastfeeding, children under 3 months and not for use in chicken pox Paracetamol - long term conditions requiring regular pain relief, severe renal or severe hepatic impairment. Children under 2 months, babies born before 37 weeks and babies weighing less than 4 kg	Resources and Resources

Condition	Exceptions	Examples (Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only)	Over the Counter restrictions*	Patient Resources
			Pseudoephedrine - children under 12 years, pregnancy, breastfeeding, severe hypertension, severe coronary artery disease, taking MAOIs.	
Cradle Cap (Seborrhoeic dermatitis – infants) 	If causing distress to the infant and not improving	Emulsifying ointments and shampoos, examples include; Capsal®, Dentinox® Shampoo Cradle Cap, Infaderm® Shampoo, Metanium® Cradle Cap Cream.	If it has spread to the face. Broken skin or infected skin	Resources
Haemorrhoids 	Red Flag symptoms	Haemorrhoid creams, ointments and suppositories.	Children under 18 years Pregnancy Breastfeeding Rectal bleeding or blood in the stool	Resources
Infant Colic 	Red Flag symptoms	Simeticone and dimeticone suspensions lactase drops	Dimeticone colic drops -should be avoided in fructose, glucose-galactose or sucrose intolerant patients as it contains sucrose.	Resources
Mild Cystitis 	Red Flag symptoms	Sodium bicarbonate or potassium citrate granules	Sodium citrate 4g sachets products – men, children under 16 years, diabetic, heart disease, hypertension, renal disease, pregnancy and breastfeeding Potassium citrate products - children under 6 years, history of renal disease, pregnancy and breastfeeding	Resources

Minor Conditions Suitable for Self- Care				
Condition	Exceptions	Examples (Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only)	Over the Counter restrictions*	Patient Resources
Mild Irritant Dermatitis 		Emollients Steroid creams Crotamiton e.g. Eurax®	Eurax® 3 years or under Steroid creams 10 years or under Pregnancy Breastfeeding Broken or inflamed skin Use on the eyes, face or ano-genital region	Resources
Dandruff 		Antidandruff shampoos (e.g. coal tar or selenium) Antifungal shampoos (e.g. ketoconazole)	All products Pregnancy, breastfeeding Ketoconazole Children under 12 years Coal tar products Children under 12 years, infected open skin lesions and sore or acute pustular psoriasis Selenium sulphide children under 5 years	Resources
Diarrhoea (Adults) 		Loperamide 2mg capsules Rehydration sachets	Loperamide inflammatory bowel disease, post bowel surgery, post pelvic radiation and colorectal cancer Oral rehydration sachets liver or renal disease, patients on low potassium/sodium diets and patients with diabetes (Note Dioralyte relief can be given to diabetics)	Resources
Dry eyes/Sore tired eyes 		Eye drops for sore tired eyes e.g. hypromellose 0.3% eye drops		Resources
Earwax 		Drops containing sodium bicarbonate, hydrogen peroxide, olive oil or almond oil.	None identified	Resources

Condition	Exceptions	Examples (Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only)	Over the Counter restrictions*	Patient resources
Excessive sweating – Hyperhidrosis 		Aluminium chloride sprays, roll-ons, solutions.	None	Resources
Head lice 		Creams or lotions for head lice (e.g. malathion or dimethicone) Bug busting (no restrictions, although consider patient factors)	Children under 6 months Current skin conditions of the scalp. Side effects of a severe infestation.	Resources
Indigestion and heartburn 		Antacid tablets or liquids Ranitidine 75mg tablets OTC proton pump inhibitors e.g. omeprazole 10mg capsules or pantoprazole 20mg tablets. Sodium alginate, calcium carbonate or sodium bicarbonate liquids	All products Pregnancy, breastfeeding, jaundice or liver disease Gaviscon® Children under 12 years, renal failure, hypercalcaemia, nephrocalcinosis, kidney stones Gaviscon® Infant Infants under 12 months and children over 2 years; babies born before 37 weeks; and renal impairment Proton pump inhibitors Children under 18 years or adults over 55 years with new or recently changed symptoms Ranitidine Children under 16 years. People taking NSAIDs, especially those with a history of peptic ulcer and the elderly should not self-medicate with ranitidine 75 mg film-coated tablet but seek their doctor's advice before use	Resources

Condition	Exceptions	Examples (Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only)	Over the Counter restrictions*	Patient resources
Infrequent constipation 	Babies and toddlers (see link under patient resources for self-care measures)	Bisacodyl 5mg tablets Senna Ispaghula husk granules Lactulose solution	Lactulose Galactosaemia, gastro-intestinal obstruction, digestive perforation or risk of digestive perforation Bisacodyl Acute inflammatory bowel diseases, severe dehydration, pregnancy and breastfeeding and children under 10 years. Senna Severe dehydration, children under 18 years, pregnancy and breastfeeding. Ispaghula husk granules Children under 6 years and diabetes.	Resources
Infrequent migraine 		Migraine tablets (e.g. Migralve®) Painkillers Anti-sickness tablets (prochlorperazine – Buccastem M ®)	For this indication: Ibuprofen Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief; asthma; unstable high blood pressure; taking anticoagulants; stomach ulcer, perforation or bleeding (active or history of); renal, hepatic or cardiac impairment; pregnancy ; breastfeeding. Paracetamol Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief. Co-codamol Children under 12 years, severe liver disease, breastfeeding and pregnancy. Prochlorperazine maleate Under 18 years, impaired liver function, existing blood dyscrasias, epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, prostatic hypertrophy, narrow angle glaucoma, pregnancy and breastfeeding.	Resources

Condition	Exceptions	Examples (Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only)	Over the Counter restrictions*	Patient resources
Insect bites and stings 		Steroid creams or creams for itching (e.g. Anthisan®)	Mepyramine maleate 2% Broken or infected skin and children under 2 years Steroid preparations See above under Mild Irritant Dermatitis .	Resources
Mild acne 		Benzoyl peroxide products Salicylic acid products	Pregnancy, breastfeeding Damaged skin Elderly Children under 12 years	Resources
Mild dry skin 		Emollient creams, ointments and lotions	Broken or infected skin Some preparations have age restrictions	
Sunburn due to excessive sun exposure 	Severe sunburn in babies and young children	After sun cream	None	Resources
Sun protection 	ACBS approved indication of photodermatoses (i.e. where skin protection should be prescribed)	Sun creams (NB preparations with a SPF less than 30 are not prescribable).	None	
Mild to moderate hay fever/seasonal rhinitis 		Antihistamine tablets or liquids. Steroid nasal sprays Sodium cromoglicate eye drops	Chlorphenamine - tablets - children under 6 years 2mg/5ml solution - children under 1 year. Taken monoamine oxidase inhibitors within the last 14 days; epilepsy; raised intra-ocular pressure including glaucoma; prostatic hypertrophy; severe hypertension or cardiovascular disease; bronchitis	

Condition	Exceptions	Examples (Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only)	Over the Counter restrictions*	Patient resources
←			<p>bronchiectasis or asthma; hepatic impairment; renal impairment; rare hereditary problems of galactose intolerance, Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose-galactose malabsorption; pregnancy and breastfeeding.</p> <p>Loratadine Tablets - children under 6 years 1mg/ml syrup - children under 2 years. Rare hereditary problems of galactose intolerance, the Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose-galactose malabsorption; liver impairment; pregnancy and breastfeeding.</p> <p>Acrivastine Children under 12 years and adults over 65 years; renal impairment; rare hereditary problems of galactose intolerance, the Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose-galactose malabsorption; pregnancy and breastfeeding.</p> <p>Cetirizine Tablets - children under 6 years 1mg/ml solution - children under 2 years. Epilepsy; renal impairment; rare hereditary problems of fructose intolerance; pregnancy and breastfeeding.</p> <p>Beclomethasone 0.05% nasal spray Children under 18 years, pregnancy and breastfeeding.</p> <p>Sodium Cromoglicate 2% eye drops Children under 6 years, pregnancy and breastfeeding.</p>	<p>Resources and Resources</p>

Condition	Exceptions	Examples (Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only)	Over the Counter restrictions*	Patient resources
Minor burns and scalds 	No specific exceptions. Severe burns and other burns requiring hospital A&E treatment include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all chemical and electrical burns; • large or deep burns; • burns that cause white or charred skin; • burns on the face, hands, arms, feet, legs or genitals that cause blisters 	Antiseptic burns cream, powder Cooling burn gel.	Betadine Powder – Pregnancy; breastfeeding; children under 2 years and taking lithium therapy	Resources
Minor conditions associated with pain, discomfort and/fever. (e.g. aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain) 		Paracetamol 500mg tablets, suspension Ibuprofen 200mg, 400mg tablets, suspension NSAID topical creams or gels	Ibuprofen Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief; asthma; unstable high blood pressure; severe renal or severe hepatic impairment; taking anticoagulants; stomach ulcers/problems; children under 3 months; pregnancy; breastfeeding; and not for use in chicken pox Paracetamol Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief; severe renal or severe hepatic Impairment; children under 2 months; babies born before 37 weeks; and babies weighing less than 4 kg. Co-codamol Children under 12 years; severe liver disease; breastfeeding and pregnancy	General; Resources Back pain; Resources Fever in children; Resources

Condition	Exceptions	Examples (Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only)	Over the Counter restrictions*	Patient resources
Mouth ulcers ←		Lidocaine hydrochloride/ Chlorocresol Cetylpyridinium chloride eg Anbesol® Choline salicylate/Cetalkonium chloride eg Bonjela®Benzocaine e.g. Orajel®	Various age restrictions Active peptic ulceration (some preparations) Pregnancy Breastfeeding	Resources
Nappy rash ←	Nappy wearers with short bowel	Nappy rash creams	None	Resources
Oral thrush ←		Miconazole oral gel	Children under 4 months Pregnancy, breastfeeding Patients taking warfarin Liver dysfunction	Resources
Prevention of dental caries ←	Note fluoride toothpastes 5000ppm are POM	Fluoride toothpastes (see local guidelines) Mouthwashes	Children under 12 years	Healthy teeth; Resources and Tooth decay; Resources

Condition	Exceptions	Examples (Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only)	Over the Counter restrictions*	Patient resources
Ringworm/ Athletes foot 		Athlete's Foot Cream Antifungal creams or sprays (e.g. miconazole or terbinafine)	All products Diabetic, pregnancy, breastfeeding. Terbinafine hydrochloride Children under 16 years Some preparations may only be licensed for athletes foot.	Resources
Teething/Mild toothache 		Antiseptic pain relieving gel Clove Oil Painkillers	Ibuprofen Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief; asthma; unstable high blood pressure; taking anticoagulants; stomach ulcer, perforation or bleeding (active or history of); renal, hepatic or cardiac impairment; pregnancy; breastfeeding; children under 3 months; and not for use in chicken pox. Paracetamol Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief; severe renal or severe hepatic impairment; children under 2 months, babies born before 37 weeks; and babies weighing less than 4 kg. Bonjela® teething gel Babies under 2 months, heart disease and liver disease	Resources
Threadworms 		Mebendazole 100mg tablets	Children under 2 years Pregnancy Breastfeeding	Resources

Condition	Exceptions	Examples (Note: some of the products may be pharmacy only)	Over the Counter restrictions*	Patient resources
Travel sickness 		Travel sickness tablets	Cinnarizine: Parkinson's disease; fructose or galactose intolerance; Lapp lactase deficiency; glucose-galactose malabsorption or sucrase-isomaltase insufficiency; porphyria; children under 5 years; pregnancy and breastfeeding. Hyoscine: Children under 3 years (Joyrides®) under 4 years (Kwells®); Epilepsy; glaucoma; pregnancy and breastfeeding; paralytic ileus; pyloric stenosis; prostatic enlargement; myasthenia gravis.	Resources
Warts and Verrucae 		Creams, gels, skin paints and medicated plasters containing salicylic acid. Dimethyl ether propane cold spray	Diabetic patients Face, neck, ano-genital area Moles, birthmarks, hairy warts or skin lesions Broken skin Impaired peripheral blood circulation Some preparations not to be used in children under 4 years.	Resources Link

*This list may not be exhaustive, if needed, see patient information leaflets within the [EMC](#).

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References

Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf>

PrescQIPP self-care resources - <https://www.prescqipp.info/selfcare/projectsection/projects/selfcare#self-care-project-planning-tool>

NHS.uk Website- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/>

Electronic Medicines Compendium - [EMC](#)

Appendix 1 – from nhs.uk

Be prepared for common ailments by keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home.

[This list](#), recommended by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, will help you deal with most minor ailments.

Pain relief

[Painkillers](#) like [aspirin](#), [paracetamol](#) and [ibuprofen](#) are highly effective at relieving most minor aches and pains, such as headaches and period pain.

These medicines also help with some minor ailments, such as the [common cold](#), by reducing aches, pain and high temperatures.

Paracetamol, aspirin and ibuprofen also help reduce the inflammation seen in [arthritis](#) and [sprains](#).

Bear in mind:

- aspirin mustn't be given to children under 16
- ibuprofen must be taken with caution if you have certain conditions, such as asthma – check with your pharmacist if in doubt
- pregnant women shouldn't take ibuprofen – visit the [bumps](#) website to find out more about taking medicines when you're pregnant

Antihistamines

These are useful for dealing with [allergies](#) and [insect bites](#). They're also helpful if you have [hay fever](#).

[Antihistamines](#) can come in the form of creams you apply to the skin (topical antihistamine) or tablets you swallow (oral antihistamine).

Antihistamine creams soothe insect stings and bites, and rashes and itching from stinging nettles.

Antihistamine tablets help control hay fever symptoms and calm minor allergic reactions to food. They can also help calm itchiness during [chickenpox](#).

Some antihistamines may cause drowsiness. Ask your pharmacist about this as there are some antihistamines that don't cause drowsiness.

Oral rehydration salts

Fever, [diarrhoea](#) and vomiting make us lose water and essential minerals, and can lead to [dehydration](#).

Oral rehydration salts, available at pharmacies, are an easy way to help restore your body's natural balance of minerals and fluid, and help your recovery.

But they don't fight the cause of your illness, such as a virus or bacteria.

Anti-diarrhoea tablets

Diarrhoea is caused by a range of things, such as [food poisoning](#) or a stomach virus, and can happen without warning. It's a good idea to keep an anti-diarrhoea medicine at home.

Anti-diarrhoea remedies can quickly control the symptoms of diarrhoea, although they don't deal with the underlying cause.

The most common anti-diarrhoeal is loperamide, sold under the names Imodium, Arret and Diasorb, among others. It works by slowing down the action of your gut.

Don't give anti-diarrhoea medicines to children under 12 as they may have undesirable side effects. Speak to your GP or pharmacist for advice about a child with these symptoms.

Indigestion treatment

If you have [stomach ache](#) or [heartburn](#), a simple antacid will reduce stomach acidity and bring relief.

Antacids come as chewable tablets, tablets that dissolve in water, or in liquid form.

Sunscreen

Keep a sun lotion of at least factor 15. Even fairly brief exposure to the sun can cause sunburn and increase your risk of [skin cancer](#). Ensure your sunscreen provides UVA protection.

You can protect yourself against the sun further by wearing a hat and sunglasses, and by avoiding the sun during the hottest part of the day between 11am and 3pm.

Your first aid kit

A well-prepared first aid kit can help treat minor cuts, sprains and bruises, and reduce the risk of cuts becoming infected.

It should contain the following items:

- **bandages** – these can support injured limbs, such as a sprained wrist, and also apply direct pressure to larger cuts before being treated in hospital
- **plasters** – a range of sizes, waterproof if possible
- **thermometer** – digital thermometers that you put in your mouth produce very accurate readings; an under-arm thermometer or an ear thermometer are good ways to read a baby or young child's temperature

- **antiseptic** – this can be used to clean cuts before they're bandaged, and most can treat a range of conditions, including insect stings, ulcers and pimples; alcohol-free antiseptic wipes are useful to clean cuts
- **eyewash solution** – this will help wash out grit or dirt in the eyes
- **sterile dressings** – larger injuries should be covered with a sterile dressing to prevent infection until treatment can be given by a health professional
- **medical tape** – this is used to stick dressings on the skin and can also be used to tape an injured finger to an uninjured one, creating a makeshift splint
- **tweezers** – for taking out [splinters](#); if splinters are left in, they can cause discomfort and become infected

Medicine safety

When keeping medicines at home, remember:

- always follow the directions on medicine packets and information leaflets, and never take more than the stated dose
- always keep medicines out of the sight and reach of children – a high, lockable cupboard in a cool, dry place is ideal
- regularly check the expiry dates on a medicine – if a medicine is past its use-by date, don't use it or throw it away: take it to your pharmacy, where it can be disposed of safely

If you have questions about any medicines or you want to buy them, ask your local pharmacist.

How your pharmacist can help you

Don't forget your local pharmacist can help with many ailments, such as [coughs](#), [colds](#), [asthma](#), [eczema](#), [hay fever](#), and [period pain](#).

They can give advice or, where appropriate, medicines that can help clear up the problem.

Instead of booking an appointment with your GP, you can see your local pharmacist any time – just walk in.

Learn more about how your pharmacist can help with [treating common conditions](#).

Appendix 2

Useful resources

Patient leaflets (Note these documents also sit on the medicines and prescribing page directly for ease of access)

[PrescQIPP / Sheffield patient leaflet](#)

NHSE patient leaflet (<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/1a-over-the-counter-leaflet-v1.pdf>)

Patient information leaflet – Prescribing of Over the counter medicines is changing - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/1a-over-the-counter-leaflet-v1.pdf> (print quality version) - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/1a-over-the-counter-leaflet-print-ready.pdf>)

Easy read version - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/1b-easy-read-over-the-counter-leaflet.pdf>

Patient information sheet (space to add notes / specific advice as needed) - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/1c-over-the-counter-patient-info-sheet.pdf>

Professional resources

[Receptionist information sheet checklist](#) – Note age limits may apply, refer to full guidelines for specific details regarding exceptions

NHSE quick reference guide - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/over-the-counter-quick-reference-guide.pdf>

[No prescription required' leaflet from PrescQIPP](#)

Posters

[Sheffield self-care poster](#)

[Choose self-care](#)

[Medicines cabinet poster](#)

[Cough & colds](#)