

Over the counter items - GP guide to self care

In March 2018, NHS England published guidance for conditions for which over the counter (OTC) items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care.¹ It listed 35 conditions plus probiotics and vitamins and minerals, as areas where self care may be more appropriate. There are, however, some exceptions to this guidance listed below.

General exceptions to the guidance

There are certain scenarios where patients should continue to have their treatments prescribed. These are:

- 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 OTC 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.
- 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 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.

This guide covers:

- The licenced indications of products available OTC and highlights where the licensing exceptions would prohibit self care.
- The general exceptions for the medicine and exceptions due to product licences for over the counter medicines available to treat the conditions listed in the NHS England guidance.

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Items of low clinical effectiveness

<p>1. Probiotics</p>	<p>There is currently insufficient clinical evidence to support prescribing of probiotics within the NHS for the treatment or prevention of diarrhoea of any cause.^{2,3}</p> <p>Exceptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACBS approved indication or as per local policy. The ACBS recommends some foods and toilet preparations that may be regarded as drugs for the treatment of specified conditions. If a doctor is satisfied that the product can be safely prescribed, that patients will be adequately monitored and have access to hospital supervision if needed, they can prescribe these products on a prescription endorsed with “ACBS”.
<p>2. Vitamins and minerals</p>	<p>There is insufficient high-quality evidence to demonstrate the clinical effectiveness of vitamins and minerals.⁴</p> <p>Vitamins and minerals are essential nutrients which most people can and should get from eating a healthy, varied, and balanced diet. In most cases, dietary supplementation is unnecessary.</p> <p>Many vitamin and mineral supplements are classified as foods and not medicines; they therefore do not have to go through the strict criteria laid down by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) to confirm their quality, safety, and efficacy before reaching the market. It is therefore not deemed appropriate for such preparations to be routinely funded on the NHS.</p> <p>Any prescribing not in-line with listed exceptions should be discontinued.</p> <p>This guidance does not apply to Healthy Start Vitamins, but these are not currently prescribed on an NHS prescription.</p> <p>Exceptions</p> <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. NB maintenance or preventative treatment is not an exception. • Calcium and vitamin D for osteoporosis. • Malnutrition including alcoholism. • Patients suitable to receive Healthy Start Vitamins for pregnancy or children between the ages of six months to their fourth birthday. (NB. this is not on prescription but commissioned separately).

Self-limiting conditions

Please note the following information about the column headings:

Medication - For further advice see product information leaflet

Common brands - The lists are not exhaustive and other brands are available which a community pharmacist will be able to advise upon.

OTC restrictions - For further advice on restrictions, see product information leaflet

Classification - P = pharmacy only GSL = general sales list

Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
3. Acute sore throat	Red flag symptoms	Benzydamine 0.15% mouthwash ⁵ and oromucosal spray ⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difflam® Spray⁷ • Difflam® Oral rinse⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 12 years (oral rinse) • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	P
		Throat lozenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strepsils®⁹ • Throaties®¹⁰ • Tyrozets®¹¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diabetes • Children under 6 years (Strepsils®) • Children under 3 years (Throaties® Tyrozets®) • Fructose intolerance, glucose- galactose malabsorption or sucrose- isomaltose insufficiency • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	GSL P
		Throat sprays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ultra Chloraseptic®¹² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 6 years • Epiglottitis • Methaemoglobinaemia • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	GSL
4. Infrequent cold sores of the lip	Immuno-compromised patients Red flag symptoms	Aciclovir cream 5% ¹³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virasorb®¹⁴ • Zovirax®¹⁵ • Lypsyl®¹⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immunocompromised and terminally ill • Only for face and lips 	GSL

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Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
5. Conjunctivitis	Red flag symptoms	Chloramphenicol 0.5% eye drops ¹⁷ Chloramphenicol 1% eye ointment ¹⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brochlor®¹⁹ • Golden eye®²⁰ • Optrex®²¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 2 years • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	P
6. Coughs and colds and nasal congestion	Red flag symptoms	Paracetamol 500mg tablets ²² and capsules ²³ Paracetamol 120mg/5ml suspension (from 3 months) sugar free ²⁴ Paracetamol 250mg/5ml suspension (from 6 years old) ²⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anadin paracetamol®²⁶ • Mandanol®²⁷ • Panadol®²⁸ • Hedex®²⁹ • Calpol®³⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe renal or severe hepatic impairment • Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief • Children under 2 months • Babies born before 37 weeks • Babies weighing less than 4kg 	GSL/P depending on pack size
		Ibuprofen 200mg, 400mg capsules/tablets ³¹⁻³⁴ Ibuprofen 100mg/5ml oral suspension ³⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anadin Ibuprofen®³⁶ • Nurofen®³⁷ • Calprofen®³⁸ • Cuprofen®³⁹ • Anadin Joint pain®⁴⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief • Asthma • Unstable high blood pressure • Taking anticoagulants • Stomach ulcer, perforation or bleeding (active or history of) • Children under 3 months • Renal impairment • Hepatic impairment • Cardiac impairment • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Avoid the use in chicken pox 	GSL/P depending on pack size

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Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
6. Coughs and colds and nasal congestion continued	Red flag symptoms	Pseudoephedrine or pseudoephedrine-containing preparations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudafed®⁴¹ • Benadryl® Allergy Relief Plus Decongestant Capsules⁴² • Galpseud®⁴³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 12 years • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Severe hypertension or severe coronary artery disease • Severe renal impairment • Phaeochromocytoma • Diabetes • Hyperthyroidism • Closed angle glaucoma 	P
		<p>Paracetamol 1000mg/ Pholcodine 10mg/ Pseudoephedrine HCL 60mg in 30ml oral solution⁴⁴</p> <p>Paracetamol 500mg/ Pholcodine 5mg/ Pseudoephedrine HCL 30mg capsules⁴⁵</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Nurse® Oral Solution⁴⁴ • Day Nurse® Capsules⁴⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 16 years • Severe hypertension or severe coronary artery disease • Severe renal impairment • Hyperexcitability • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	P
7. Cradle cap (seborrhoeic dermatitis - infants)	If causing distress to the infant and not improving	Emulsifying ointment and shampoo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capasal™ Therapeutic Shampoo⁴⁶ • Dentinox® Shampoo Cradle Cap⁴⁷ • Boots Cradle Cap Cream®⁴⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the cradle cap has spread to the face • Do not use on broken skin or infected skin 	GSL
8. Haemorrhoids	Red flag symptoms	Zinc oxide preparations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anusol® cream⁴⁹ ointment⁵⁰ and suppositories⁵¹ • Germoloids® cream⁵² ointment⁵³ and suppositories⁵⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not recommended for children (Anusol®) • Children under 12 years (Germoloids®) • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Rectal bleeding or blood in stools 	GSL

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9. Infant colic	Red flag symptoms	Simeticone 40mg/ml ⁵⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infacol®⁵⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions 	GSL
		Dimeticone 42mg/5ml ⁵⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dentinox®⁵⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fructose, glucose-galactose, or sucrose intolerant patients (contains sucrose) 	GSL
10. Mild cystitis	Red flag symptoms	Sodium citrate 4g sachet ⁵⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caneoasis cystitis relief granules®⁵⁸ • Boots cystitis relief®⁵⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men • Children under 16 years • Diabetes • Heart disease, hypertension, renal disease • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	GSL
		Potassium citrate 1.5g liquid ⁶⁰ 3g sachet ⁶¹ 1.5g tablet (effervescent) ⁶²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cymaclear®⁶⁰ • Cystopurin®⁶¹ • Effercitrate®⁶² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 6 years • Renal disease/impairment • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	GSL

Minor illnesses suitable for self care

Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
11. Mild irritant dermatitis	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Emollients Crotamiton Steroid-containing preparations such as hydrocortisone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eurax®⁶³ • Eurax-Hc® Cream⁶⁴ • Hc45 Hydrocortisone Cream®⁶⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 12 years with certain brands however: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Eurax® licenced for children over 3 years » Hc45® Hydrocortisone Cream licenced for children over 10 years • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Broken or inflamed skin • Use on the eyes and face • Ano-genital region 	P
12. Dandruff	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Ketoconazole-containing shampoo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nizoral® Anti-dandruff shampoo⁶⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Children under 12 years 	GSL
		Coal tar shampoo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polytar® scalp shampoo⁶⁷ • Capasal™ Therapeutic Shampoo⁶⁸ • Alphosyl® '2in1' shampoo⁶⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Children under 12 years • Infected open skin lesions • Sore or acute pustular psoriasis 	GSL/P
		Selenium sulfide shampoo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selsun® Shampoo⁷⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Children under 5 years 	P

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13. Diarrhoea (Adults only)	No routine exceptions have been identified	Oral rehydration solutions/sachets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dioralyte® Relief Sachets⁷¹ • Imodium® Rehydration Salts⁷² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 5 years • Liver or renal disease • Low potassium/sodium diets • Diabetes 	GSL
	See earlier for general exceptions THIS RECOMMENDATION DOES NOT APPLY TO CHILDREN	Loperamide 2mg capsules ⁷³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imodium®⁷⁴ • Dioraleze®⁷⁵ • Entrocalm®⁷⁵ • Diafix®⁷⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflammatory bowel disease • Post bowel surgery • Post pelvic radiation • Colorectal cancer 	GSL/P depending on pack size
14. Dry eyes/ sore (tired) eyes	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions Pre-existing eye conditions	Hypromellose 0.3% ⁷⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tears Naturale® Eye Drops⁷⁷ • Isopto® Plain⁷⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 18 years (Carbomer) • Pregnancy, breastfeeding (check individual brands) 	P
		Carbomer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viscotears® Liquid Gel⁷⁹ • Gel Tears®⁸⁰ • Liquivisc®⁸¹ 		
		Yellow Soft Paraffin BP/ PhEur Anhydrous Lanolin (Wool Fat) BP/PhEur Liquid Paraffin BP/ PhEur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple® Eye Ointment⁸² 		
		Distilled witchhazel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optrex® Sore Eyes Drops⁸³ 		

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15. Earwax	<p>No routine exceptions have been identified</p> <p>See earlier for general exceptions</p> <p>Perforated ear drum</p>	<p>Olive oil drops</p> <p>Arachis oil/ chlorobutanol hemihydrate drops</p> <p>Docusate sodium 0.5% drops</p> <p>Acetic acid 2% (not licensed for wax removal, may help if ears itch after wax removal, however significant itching may indicate infection and this should be confirmed and treated by the GP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cerumol®⁸⁴ • Waxsol®⁸⁵ • EarCalm®⁸⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions 	<p>GSL (Olive oil)</p> <p>P (all other ear drops/sprays)</p>
16. Excessive sweating (hyperhidrosis)	<p>No routine exceptions have been identified</p> <p>See earlier for general exceptions</p>	Aluminium chloride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driclor®⁸⁷ • Anhydrol Forte®⁸⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken or infected skin • External use only 	P
17. Head lice	<p>No routine exceptions have been identified</p>	Dimeticone gel, lotion or spray 4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hedrin®⁸⁹ • Nyda®⁹⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 6 months • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Avoid use on broken or inflamed skin 	GSL/P depending on pack size
	<p>See earlier for general exceptions</p>	Malathion Aqueous lotion 0.5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derbac-M®⁹¹ 		GSL
	<p>Current skin conditions of the scalp</p> <p>Side effects of a severe infestation</p>	<p>Conditioner</p> <p>Headlice combs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions 	GSL

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18. Indigestion and heartburn	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Sodium alginate Calcium carbonate Sodium bicarbonate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaviscon® tablets⁹² Gaviscon Double action®⁹³ Acidex®⁹⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children under 12 years Renal failure Hypercalcaemia Nephrocalcinosis Kidney stones 	GSL
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaviscon Infant®⁹⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children under 12 months Babies born before 37 weeks Children over 2 years Renal impairment 	P
		Esomeprazole 20mg tablets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nexium Control®⁹⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children under 18 years Adults over 55 years Pregnancy, breastfeeding Jaundice or liver disease 	GSL
		Pantoprazole 20mg tablets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pantoloc Control®⁹⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children under 18 years Adults over 55 years Pregnancy, breastfeeding Jaundice or liver disease 	P
		Ranitidine 75mg tablets ⁹⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zantac®⁹⁹ Gavilast®¹⁰⁰ Ranicalm®¹⁰¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children under 16 years Peptic ulceration Elderly taking NSAIDs Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	GSL (pack size 12 tablets)

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19. Infrequent constipation	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Lactulose ¹⁰²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duphalac®¹⁰³ • Lactugal®¹⁰⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galactosaemia • Gastro-intestinal obstruction, digestive perforation or risk of digestive perforation 	P
		Bisacodyl tablets 5mg ¹⁰⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dulcolax®¹⁰⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute inflammatory bowel diseases • Severe dehydration • Pregnancy and breastfeeding • Children under 4 years 	GSL/P depending on pack size
		Senna ¹⁰⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senokot® Dual Relief Tablets¹⁰⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe dehydration • Children under 18 years • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	GSL
		Ispaghula Husk Granules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fybogel®¹⁰⁹ • Ispagel®¹¹⁰ • Manevac®¹¹¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 6 years • Diabetes 	GSL

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20. Infrequent migraine	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Prochlorperazine maleate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buccastem® M Tab 3mg¹¹² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impaired liver function Existing blood dyscrasias Epilepsy Parkinson's Disease Prostatic hypertrophy Narrow angle glaucoma Pregnancy, breastfeeding Children under 18 years 	P
		Paracetamol 500mg tablets ²² and capsules ²³ Paracetamol 500mg/5ml oral solution ¹¹³ Paracetamol 500mg soluble tablets ¹¹⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anadin paracetamol®²⁶ Mandanol®²⁷ Panadol®²⁸ Hedex®²⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief Children under 12 years Severe renal or severe hepatic impairment 	GSL/P depending on pack size
		Ibuprofen 200mg, 400mg capsules and tablets ³¹⁻³⁴ Ibuprofen 100mg/5ml liquid/suspension sugar free ³⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anadin® Ibuprofen³⁶ Nurofen®³⁷ Calprofen®³⁸ Cuprofen®³⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief Asthma Unstable high blood pressure Taking anticoagulants Stomach ulcer, perforation or bleeding (active or history of) Renal impairment Hepatic impairment Cardiac impairment Children under 12 years Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	GSL/P depending on pack size

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Infrequent migraine continued	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Co-codamol 8/500mg tablets, capsules, effervescent tablets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migralve® Yellow tablets¹¹⁵ • Paracodol®¹¹⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 12 years • Severe liver disease • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	P (up to 32 tablets)
21. Insect bites and stings	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Mepyramine maleate 2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthisan® Bite & Sting cream 2%¹¹⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken or infected skin • Children under 2 years 	GSL
		Lidocaine hydrochloride/zinc sulphate/cetrimide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Savlon® Bites & Stings Pain Relief Gel¹¹⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 12 years • Animal bites • Broken or infected skin 	GSL
		Calamine/zinc oxide ¹¹⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calamine lotion¹¹⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken or infected skin 	GSL
		Chloroxylenol/triclosan/edetic acid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dettol® Antiseptic Cream¹²⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dermatitis, eczema or other skin complaints 	GSL
22. Mild acne	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Benzoyl peroxide-containing preparations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acnecide® gel¹²¹ • Acnecide® wash¹²² • Quinoderm® cream¹²³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Damaged skin • Elderly • Children under 12 years 	P
23. Mild dry skin	See earlier for general exceptions	Emollients, creams and ointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balneum Plus®¹²⁴ • Cetraben®¹²⁵ • Dermol®¹²⁶ • E45®¹²⁷ • Oilatum®¹²⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken or inflamed skin • E45 for children over 1 month old • Cetraben® Cream and lotion over 1 year olds 	GSL

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24. Sunburn due to excessive sun exposure	See earlier for general exceptions	After sun products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various including calamine lotion¹¹⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions 	GSL
25. Sun protection	<p>ACBS approved indication of photo-dermatoses (i.e. where skin protection should be prescribed)</p> <p>See earlier for general exceptions</p>	Sun protection cream/ sprays/gels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions 	GSL

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26. Mild to moderate hay fever/ allergic rhinitis	No routine exceptions have been identified	Chlorphenamine 4mg tablets ¹²⁹ Chlorphenamine 2mg/5ml solution ¹³⁰	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Piriton®¹³¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 6 years - tablets, children under 1 years - solution • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Adult or children taking monoamine oxidase inhibitors within the last 14 days • Caution in epilepsy; raised intra- ocular pressure including glaucoma; prostatic hypertrophy; severe hypertension or cardiovascular disease; bronchitis, bronchiectasis or asthma; hepatic impairment; renal impairment • Rare hereditary problems of galactose intolerance, Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose-galactose malabsorption 	P
	See earlier for general exceptions	Loratadine 10mg tablets ¹³² Loratadine 5mg/5ml syrup ¹³³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarityn Allergy®¹³⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 6 years - tablets, children under 2 years - syrup • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Liver impairment • Rare hereditary problems of galactose intolerance, the Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose- galactose malabsorption 	GSL/P depending on pack sizes
		Acrivastine 8mg capsules ¹³⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benadryl Allergy Relief®¹³⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 12 years • Adults over 65 years • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Renal impairment • Rare hereditary problems of galactose intolerance, the Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose-galactose malabsorption 	GSL/P depending on pack sizes

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Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
Mild to moderate hay fever/allergic rhinitis continued	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Cetirizine 10mg tablets ¹³⁶ Cetirizine 1mg/ml solution ¹³⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zirtek Allergy Relief®¹³⁸ • Piriteze Allergy®¹³⁹ • Benadryl Allergy®¹⁴⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 6 years - tablets, children under 2 years - solution (depending on the brand) • Renal impairment • Rare hereditary problems of fructose intolerance • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Epilepsy 	GSL/P depending on pack sizes
		Beclomethasone 0.05% nasal spray	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beconase Hayfever®¹⁴¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 18 years • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	GSL/P depending on pack sizes
		Sodium cromoglycate 2% eye drops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allercrom®¹⁴² • Optrex Hayfever Relief®¹⁴³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 6 years • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	GSL

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Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
27. Minor burns and scalds	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:	Antiseptic burn cream Cooling burn gel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Betadine® Dry Powder Spray¹⁴⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Children under 2 years • Lithium therapy 	GSL
	<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. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Germolene® Antiseptic Cream¹⁴⁵ • Germolene® Antiseptic Ointment¹⁴⁶ • Savlon® Antiseptic Cream¹⁴⁷ • Sudocrem® Antiseptic Healing Cream¹⁴⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken or infected skin 	GSL

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Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
28. Minor conditions associated with pain, discomfort and fever, e.g. aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Paracetamol 500mg tablets ²² and capsules ²³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anadin paracetamol®²⁶ • Mandanol®²⁷ • Panadol®²⁸ • Hedex®²⁹ • Calpol®³⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief • Children under 2 months Babies born before 37 weeks Babies weighing less than 4kg • Severe renal or severe hepatic impairment 	GSL/P depending on pack size
		Paracetamol 120mg/5ml suspension (from 3 months)/sugarfree ²⁴			
		Paracetamol 250mg/5ml suspension (from 6 years old)/sugar free ²⁵			
		Ibuprofen 200mg, 400mg tablets, capsules, liquid capsules Ibuprofen 100mg/5ml liquid/suspension sugar free	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anadin Ibuprofen®³⁶ • Nurofen®³⁷ • Calprofen®³⁸ • Cuprofen®³⁹ • Anadin Joint Pain®⁴⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief • Asthma • Unstable high blood pressure • Taking anticoagulants • Stomach ulcer, perforation or bleeding (active or history of) • Children under 3 month • Renal impairment • Hepatic impairment • Cardiac impairment • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Not for use in chicken pox 	GSL/P depending on pack size
		Co-codamol 8/500mg tablets, ¹⁴⁹ capsules, ¹⁵⁰ effervescent tablets ¹⁵¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migralve® Yellow tablets¹¹⁵ • Paracodol®¹¹⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 12 years • Severe liver disease • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	P (up to 32 tablets)

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Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
28. Minor conditions associated with pain, discomfort and fever, e.g. aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Ibuprofen 5% gel ¹⁵²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fenbid®¹⁵³ • Ibuleve®¹⁵⁴ • Nurofen®¹⁵⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 14 years • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Broken/infected skin 	GSL
29. Mouth ulcers	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Lidocaine hydrochloride/ chlorocresol/ cetylpyridinium chloride Choline salicylate/ cetalkonium chloride Benzocaine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonjela®¹⁵⁶ • Anbesol®¹⁵⁷ • Orajel®¹⁵⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 16 years • Active peptic ulceration • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	GSL
30. Nappy rash	No routine exceptions have been identified	Titanium dioxide/ titanium peroxide/ titanium salicylate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metanium® Nappy Rash ointment¹⁵⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions 	GSL
	See earlier for general exceptions	Zinc oxide/ benzyl alcohol/ benzylbenzoate/ lanolin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudocrem® Antiseptic Healing Cream¹⁴⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions 	GSL

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Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
31. Oral thrush	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Miconazole 2% oral gel 15g ¹⁶⁰	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daktarin® Oral Gel¹⁶⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children under 4 months Pregnancy, breastfeeding Patients taking warfarin Liver dysfunction 	P
32. Prevention of dental caries (dental decay)	No routine exceptions have been identified Prescription only medicines need to be re-directed to the dentist to prescribe See earlier for general exceptions	Mouthwashes such as chlorhexidine gluconate Fluoride toothpaste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corsodyl®¹⁶¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children under 12 years 	GSL
33. Ringworm/ Athletes foot	Lymphoedema or history of lower limb cellulitis See earlier for general exceptions	Miconazole 2% cream ¹⁶² Miconazole powder ¹⁶³ Miconazole 0.16% spray powder ¹⁶⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daktarin®¹⁶² Daktarin Powder¹⁶³ Daktarinaktiv®¹⁶⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diabetes Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	P (cream) GSL (powder)
		Terbinafine hydrochloride 1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lamisil® AT cream,¹⁶⁵ gel,¹⁶⁶ spray¹⁶⁷ Scholl® Athlete's Foot powder,¹⁶⁸ spray liquid¹⁶⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children under 16 years Diabetes Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	GSL

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Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
34. Teething/ mild toothache	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Paracetamol 500mg tablets, capsules, effervescent tablets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anadin Paracetamol®²⁶ • Mandanol®²⁷ • Panadol®²⁸ • Hedex®²⁹ • Calpol®³⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief • Children under 2 months • Babies born before 37 weeks • Babies weighing less than 4 kg • Severe renal or severe hepatic impairment 	GSL/P depending on pack size
		Paracetamol 120mg/5ml suspension (from 3 months) sugar free			
		Paracetamol 250mg/5ml suspension (from 6 years old) sugar free			
		Ibuprofen 200mg, 400mg capsules and tablets ³¹⁻³⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anadin Ibuprofen®³⁶ • Nurofen®³⁷ • Calprofen®³⁸ • Cuprofen®³⁹ • Anadin Joint Pain®⁴⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief • Asthma • Unstable high blood pressure • Taking anticoagulants • Stomach ulcer, perforation or bleeding (active or history of) • Children under 3 months • Renal impairment • Hepatic impairment • Cardiac impairment • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Avoid the use in chicken pox 	GSL/P depending on pack size
	Ibuprofen 100mg/5ml liquid sugar free ³⁵				
		Teething gel	Bonjela® ¹⁵⁶ Dentinox® TeethingGel ¹⁷⁰	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babies under 2 months • Heart disease • Liver disease 	GSL

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Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
35. Threadworms	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Mebendazole 100mg tablets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ovex®¹⁷¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 2 years • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	P
36. Travel sickness	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Cinnarizine tablets 15mg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stugeron® Tablets 15mg¹⁷² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parkinsons • People with fructose or galactose intolerance, Lapp lactase deficiency, glucose- galactose malabsorption or sucrase- isomaltase insufficiency, should not take this medicine because it contains lactose and sucrose • Porphyria • Children under 5 years • Pregnancy, breastfeeding 	P
		Hyoscine hydrobromide tablets 150mcg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joy-Rides® Tablets Chewable 150mcg¹⁷³ • Kwells 300mcg tablets¹⁷⁴ • Kwells Kids® Tablets 150mcg¹⁷⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 3 years (Joyrides®) under 4 years (Kwells®) • Epilepsy • Glaucoma • Pregnancy, breastfeeding • Paralytic ileus, pyloric stenosis, prostatic enlargement • Myasthenia gravis 	P

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Condition	Exceptions	Medication	Common brands	OTC restrictions	Classification
37. Warts and verrucae	No routine exceptions have been identified See earlier for general exceptions	Verruca gel such as those containing salicylic acid and lactic acid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bazuka® Extra strength gel¹⁷⁶ • Bazuka® Gel¹⁷⁷ • Bazuka® Treatment Gel¹⁷⁸ • Bazuka Extra Strength® Treatment Gel¹⁷⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diabetes patients • Face, neck, ano-genital area • Moles, birthmarks, hairy warts or skin lesions • Broken skin • Impaired peripheral blood circulation 	P GSL (Bazuka treatment gel)
		Wart paint/ointment such as those containing salicylic acid and lactic acid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salactol Collodion®¹⁸⁰ • Occlusal®¹⁸¹ • Salatac®¹⁸² • Verrugon® ointment¹⁸³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diabetes patients • Face, neck, ano-genital area • Moles, birthmarks, hairy warts or skin lesions • Broken skin • Impaired peripheral blood circulation 	P
		Wart freeze treatments containing liquid freezing agents such as dimethyl ether, propane and isobutane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholl® Freeze¹⁸⁴ • Bazuka® Sub Zero¹⁸⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children under 4 years • Diabetes patients • Face, armpits, breasts , ano-genital area • Moles, birthmarks, hairy warts or skin lesions • Broken skin • Impaired peripheral blood circulation 	GSL

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Acknowledgements

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Additional PrescQIPP resources



Quick reference guide



Patient information letter

Available here: www.prescqipp.info/our-resources/bulletins/bulletin-227-self-care-over-the-counter-items/

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