

Guidance on prescribing of medicines available for purchase Over the Counter (OTC) for minor ailment in primary care

Guidance Name	Prescribing of Medicines that are available OTC
Indications under review	Minor ailments
Date of Issue:	27/07/16
Review Date:	27/07/19
<p>The Berkshire West GP Medicines Optimisation Committee recommends that medicines which can be purchased over the counter for self-care should not be prescribed on the NHS. Patients should be asked to purchase such products.</p> <p>Please take into consideration the key points below.</p> <p>Key Points considered:</p> <p>1. An increasing range of medicines are available for purchase and it is expected that people will purchase such medicines after seeking appropriate advice from a community pharmacist or other healthcare professional, in line with the license. This is particularly the case in self-limiting illness such as those described below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment with paracetamol or ibuprofen for acute pain, such as headaches • Management of coughs and colds • Treatment with paracetamol liquid for reducing body temperature • Treatment with loperamide for one-off diarrhoea • Treatment with senna and macrogol for one-off constipation • Treatment for minor abrasions • Treatment of dry or irritated skin with emollients for patients not known to have a diagnosis of eczema or other skin conditions such as psoriasis etc. • Treatment with antihistamines for minor allergic responses • Treatment for occurrences of head-lice infestation • Treatment of bouts of dyspepsia resulting from over-indulgence • Treatment with antifungal creams and pessaries for one-off oral or vaginal thrush • Treatment with antifungal creams and powders for athlete's foot and verruca • Treatment with multi-vitamins including branded and non-branded products <p>2. Patients and the public have available an increasing range of resources for advice on medicines use e.g. Community Pharmacists, NHS 111, www.nhs.uk, which can be used to support self-care as well as their GP or Nurse. Patients and the public are encouraged to access advice and purchase homely remedies as they and their families may need.</p> <p>3. It is often cheaper for a patient to buy an OTC medicine than it is for the NHS.</p> <p>4. The NHS Constitution sets out that every patient needs to take some responsibility for their own health and the health of their family.</p> <p>5. Patients are expected, where possible, to try to alter their diet and life-style if it is probable that this is the cause of a minor health problem, e.g. dyspepsia, sun burn.</p> <p>6. Where a treatment is needed on a long-term (chronic) basis e.g. paracetamol regularly in osteoarthritis, the GP may choose to prescribe after consultation with the patient.</p> <p>7. This policy has been produced as a guide for GPs. Evidence and information was carefully considered and consulted upon by clinicians in the effective management of scarce NHS resources. There are situations where this policy may not apply to an individual patient due to their clinical exceptionality. This policy does not overrule an individual GPs clinical decision making and therefore each GP would be need to make the final decision on whether treatment is a cost-effective use of their CCG budget.</p>	



*Newbury and District
Clinical Commissioning Group*



*North and West Reading
Clinical Commissioning Group*



*South Reading
Clinical Commissioning Group*



*Wokingham
Clinical Commissioning Group*