

# Conditions for which over the counter (OTC) medicines should NOT be routinely prescribed in Primary Care Policy

## Medicines Quality Team

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# Conditions for which Over the Counter medicines should NOT be routinely prescribed in primary care

## Executive Summary:

This policy sets out the strategy for prioritising prescribing spends according to clinical needs.

Inclusion criteria:

(1) Items :

- i) For which there is little evidence of clinical effectiveness
- ii) Where there may be no clinical need to treat

(2) Condition:

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

The recommendations in this policy have been developed following local and national consultations. Prescribers should refrain from prescribing medicines and medicines for conditions listed within this policy, unless patients have exceptions –general or specific ones as set out in this policy.

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## Background:

This policy supersedes the SWB CCG's policy on Prescribing for clinical need and has been updated with information included within NHSE's guidance on Conditions for which over the counter items should not be routinely prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs. The recommendations within this policy were subject to both a national public consultation for a period of 3 months (July-October 2017) and a local SWB CCG public consultation (23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 to 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017).

As a CCG, we have a duty to ensure the local NHS budget is spent in an appropriate way. By reducing spend on items that can be purchased over the counter for minor ailments, resources will be released to commission better healthcare for more serious health conditions for our patients. Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG considers all lives of all patients whom it serves to be of equal value and, in making decision about funding treatments for patients, will not discriminate on the grounds of sex, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, educational level, employment, marital status, religion or disability save where a difference in the treatment options made available to patients is directly related to the patient's clinical condition or is related to the anticipated benefits to be derived from a proposed form of treatment. The policy will help reduce health inequalities and allow fair and equitable treatment for all our patients.

## Introduction:

In the financial year 2017/18, Sandwell & West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) spent approximately £3.2 m 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:

- i. That is considered to be self-limiting and so does not need treatment as it will heal or be cured of its own accord;
- ii. 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.

By reducing spend on treating conditions that are self-limiting or which lend themselves to self-care, or on items for which there is little evidence of clinical effectiveness, these resources can be used for other higher priority areas that have a greater impact for patients, support improvements in services and/or deliver transformation that will ensure the long-term sustainability of the NHS.

The costs to the NHS for many of the items used to treat minor conditions are often higher than the prices for which they can be purchased over the counter as there are hidden costs. For example, a pack of 12 anti-sickness tablets can be purchased for £2.18 from a pharmacy whereas the cost to the NHS is over £3.00 after including dispensing fees. The actual total cost for the NHS is over £35 when GP consultation and other administration costs are included.

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A wide range of information is available to the public on the subjects of health promotion and the management of minor self-treatable illnesses. Research shows that in many cases, people can take care of their minor conditions if they are provided with the right information; thereby releasing health care professionals to focus on patients with more complex and/or serious health concerns. Past experience with self-care builds confidence in patients, with 84 per cent choosing to self-care for new episodes.

In addition, recognising that we have one of the most deprived populations within England, we have commissioned a minor ailments scheme, which we hope will help those in need and also help reduce GP appointments for self-care.

More cost-effective use of stretched NHS resources allows money to be spent where it is most needed, whilst improving patient outcomes.

### 3.0 Scope

The policy applies to:

- All clinicians working within GP practices at Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG who prescribe for patients.
- Out of hours and extended hours primary care providers
- NHS community providers
- Acute trusts as well as outpatients clinics
- Independent providers
- Opticians
- Dentists

This policy applies to adults and children, who are registered (permanent and temporary resident) with a GP in a practice within Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG.

The policy applies to items of limited clinical effectiveness, items where there may be no need to treat, self-limiting conditions and minor conditions suitable for self-care consulted upon nationally and locally. Items on the NHSE guidance are in black font whereas additional items from our local consultation are in blue.

Probiotics	Emollients & bath/shower products
Vitamins and minerals	Other skin products
Eye care products	Silk garments

It applies to items where there may be no clinical need to treat:

Emollients and bath/shower products	Sore mouth products
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It also applies to self-limiting conditions and minor conditions suitable for self-care- see tables below for details:

Self-limiting conditions		
Acute sore throat	Cradle cap	Coughs, colds & nasal congestion
Cold sores	Haemorrhoids	Mild Cystitis
Conjunctivitis	Infant colic	

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### Minor conditions suitable for self-care

Mild Irritant Dermatitis	Infrequent migraine	Mouth Ulcers
Dandruff	Insect bites and stings	Nappy rash
Diarrhoea(adults)	Mild acne	Oral Thrush
Dry/Sore tired eyes	Mild dry skin	Prevention of dental caries
Earwax	Sunburn due to excessive sun exposure	Ringworm/Athletes foot
Excessive sweating	Sun protection	Teething/mild toothache
Head Lice	Mild-moderate hayfever/seasonal rhinitis	Threadworms
Indigestion & heartburn	Minor burns and scalds	Travel sickness
Infrequent Constipation	Minor conditions associated with pain, discomfort and/fever	Warts & Verrucae
Scabies	Vaginal Thrush	

More guidance on formulary status of items, rationale for OTC conditions, recommendations, exceptions and whether the item is available on the local minor ailment scheme (MAS) or available over the counter to purchase with OTC sale restrictions (where community pharmacist cannot sell OTC product due to licensing) can be found on pages 9 onwards.

The application of the policy does not override the professional responsibility of the health professional to make a clinical judgement based on any policy recommendations and in conjunction with the individual needs of the patient.

## General Exceptions

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

1. Patients prescribed an OTC treatment for a long term condition (e.g. regular pain relief for chronic arthritis or treatments for inflammatory bowel disease).
2. For the treatment of more complex forms of minor illnesses (e.g. severe migraines that are unresponsive to over the counter medicines).
3. 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).
4. Treatment for complex patients (e.g. immunosuppressed patients).
5. Patients on prescription only treatments.
6. 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.
7. 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 breastfeeding. Community Pharmacists will be aware of what these are and can advise accordingly.
8. Patients with a minor condition suitable for self-care that has not responded sufficiently to treatment with an OTC product.
9. Patients where the clinician considers that the presenting symptom is due to a condition that would not be considered a minor condition.
10. Circumstances where the prescriber believes that in their clinical judgement, exceptional circumstances exist that warrant deviation from the recommendation to self-care.
11. 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.

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## Resources to implement this policy

1. Advice from [NHS choices](#) or organisations such as the [self-care forum](#) is readily available on the internet.
2. 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.
3. [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.
4. Sandwell & West Birmingham formulary and Optimise Rx messages have been updated in line with the policy.
5. Resources available on the PrescQIPP website, e.g. posters, patient postcards, videos; ask your medicines quality team for more information
6. Patient letters to stop some products (e.g. for hay fever, dry skin, dry eyes and vitamin D) have been uploaded onto emis Web and SystemOne).
7. Patient information leaflets on specific conditions suitable for self-care.

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## Items of limited clinical effectiveness

Item of limited clinical effectiveness	Rationale	Recommendations	Exceptions
<p><b>Probiotics</b> e.g. VSL#3</p> <p><b>Non Formulary</b></p>  <b>Black</b>	<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.</p> <p>Both the Public Health England C. difficile guidance and NICE CG 84 recommend that probiotics cannot be recommended currently and that “Good quality randomised controlled trials should be conducted in the UK to evaluate the effectiveness and safety of a specific probiotic using clearly defined treatment regimens and outcome measures before they are routinely prescribed.”</p>	<p>No new patients should be initiated on Probiotics</p> <p>De-prescribe Probiotics in existing patients</p>	<p>None</p>
<p><b>Vitamins and minerals</b></p> <p><b>Formulary</b></p>  <b>Amber</b>	<p>There is insufficient high quality evidence to demonstrate the clinical effectiveness of vitamins and minerals.</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 Health Regulatory Authority (MHRA) to confirm their quality, safety and efficacy before reaching the market.</p> <p>Any prescribing not in-line with listed exceptions should be discontinued. This guidance does not apply to prescription only vitamin D analogues such as alfacalcidol and these should continue to be prescribed.</p>	<p>Vitamins and minerals should not be routinely prescribed in primary care due to limited evidence of clinical effectiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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.</li> <li>● Calcium and vitamin D for osteoporosis.</li> <li>● Malnutrition including alcoholism</li> <li>● 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)</li> </ul> <p>Maintenance or preventative treatment is not an exception.</p>

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Item of limited clinical effectiveness	Examples	Rationale	Recommendation	Exception
<p>Eye care</p> <p><b>Non Formulary</b></p> 	<p>Blephaclean® Eye Lid Wipe Lid-Car® Eyelid Wipe Optrex® Supranettes® Refresh® Ophth Soln 0.4ml</p>	<p>These products have no evidence of clinical effectiveness</p>	<p>Not recommended for prescribing by GPs</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Silk garments</p> <p><b>Non Formulary</b></p> 	<p>Skinnies® Derma- Silk® Dream-skin®</p>	<p>SWB CCG has approved a policy stating it does not commission or support prescribing of silk garments in children or adults with skin or gynaecological conditions. There is no good quality evidence that silk garments offer any advantage to pure cotton undergarments which are widely available on the high street at reasonable cost to patients.</p>	<p>Refer to formulary for alternatives for dressing and bandage retention or advise patients to purchase pure cotton underwear widely available on the high street</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Other skin products</p>	<p>Bio-Oil Skin Care Oil® Calamine lotion Coconut oil Products containing Dexpantenol (Bepanthen® baby protective oint, Nivea® SOS products) Flexitol® products E45® foot &amp; heel cream, Glucosamine gel SensetSkin® Cleansing Foam Skin Salvation ointment Vitamin E cream</p>	<p>These products have no clinical evidence of effectiveness and most are non-formulary. These products may provide symptomatic relief; people can choose to purchase these.</p>	<p>Not recommended for prescribing by GPs.</p>	<p>None</p>

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Items where there may be no clinical need to treat	Examples	Rationale	Recommendation	Exception
Emollients & bath/shower products	<p>Aqueous Cream  Aveeno® products,  Dermacool® products,  Dermalo® Bath Emollient,  Dermamist® Spray,  Diprobath® Emollient,  Emulsifying ointment  Eucerin® products,  Neutrogena® products  Balneum® Products  Dermol 200® Shower Emollient,  Dermol® Wash  Doublebase® products  E45® products  Hydromol® products  Oilatum® products</p>	<p>Emollients should be prescribed for the management of patients with a diagnosed dermatological condition or where skin integrity is at risk due to pruritus or xerosis.  People requesting it as a general skin moisturiser or for mild dry skin should be advised to purchase emollients over the counter.</p> <p>There is no evidence for clinical effectiveness of bath oils for childhood eczema.</p>	<p>Emollients should not be prescribed for mild dry skin conditions</p> <p>Please refer to SWBCCG formulary for a list of approved emollients.</p>	<p>Emollients should only be prescribed for patients with a confirmed diagnosis of chronic skin disease (including eczema and psoriasis).</p>

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## Self-Limiting Conditions

Self-Limiting Condition	<b>Acute sore throat</b>
Rationale	A sore throat due to a viral or bacterial cause is a self-limiting condition. Symptoms resolve within 3 days in 40% of people, and within 1 week in 85% of people, irrespective of whether or not the sore throat is due to a streptococcal infection. There is little evidence to suggest that treatments such as lozenges or throat sprays help to treat the cause of sore throat.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of acute sore throat should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is self-limiting and will clear up on its own without the need for treatment.
Exceptions	'Red Flag' symptoms. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Patients should be advised to take simple painkillers and implement some self-care measures such as gargling with warm salty water instead.
Can treatment be provide on local MAS scheme?	Yes Examples: Paracetamol tabs, Ibuprofen tabs or Difflam spray could be supplied based on pharmacist's judgement

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Benzylamine 0.15% mouthwash and oromucosal spray	Difflam® Spray Difflam® Oral rinse	Children under 12 years (oral rinse) Pregnancy & breastfeeding
Throat lozenges	Strepsils® Throaties® Max strength Tyrozets®	Diabetes Children under 6 years (Strepsils®) Children under 3 years (Tyrozets®) Children under 7 years (Throaties® Max strength) Fructose intolerance, glucose- galactose malabsorption or sucrose- isomaltose insufficiency Pregnancy, breastfeeding
Throat sprays	Ultra Chloraseptic®	Children under 6 years Epiglottitis Methaemoglobinaemia Pregnancy & breastfeeding

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Self-Limiting Condition	<b>Infrequent cold sores of the lip</b>
Rationale	Cold sores caused by the herpes simplex virus usually clear up without treatment within 7 to 10 days. Antiviral creams are available over the counter from pharmacies without a prescription and if used correctly, these can help ease symptoms and speed up the healing time. To be effective, these treatments should be applied as soon as the first signs of a cold sore appear. Using an antiviral cream after this initial period is unlikely to have much of an effect.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of cold sores should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is self-limiting and will clear up on its own without the need for treatment.
Exceptions	Immunocompromised patients. 'Red flag' symptoms. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Antiviral creams are available OTC from pharmacies without a prescription. If used correctly, they can help ease symptoms and speed up the healing time. To be effective, apply as soon as the first signs of a cold sore appear. Using an antiviral cream after this initial period is unlikely to have much of an effect.
Treatment available on local MAS scheme?	Yes Example: Aciclovir 5% cream if pharmacist deems it appropriate

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Aciclovir cream 5%	Virasorb® Zovirax® Lypsyl®	Immunocompromised and terminally ill Only for face and lips

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Self-Limiting Condition	<b>Conjunctivitis</b>
Rationale	<p>Treatment isn't usually needed for conjunctivitis as the symptoms usually clear within a week. There are several self-care measures that may help with symptoms. If treatment is needed, then treatment is dependent on the cause:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In severe bacterial cases, antibiotic eye drops and eye ointments can be used to clear the infection.</li> <li>• Irritant conjunctivitis will clear up as soon as whatever is causing it is removed.</li> <li>• Allergic conjunctivitis can usually be treated with anti-allergy medications such as antihistamines. The substance that caused the allergy should be avoided.</li> </ul>
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of conjunctivitis should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is self-limiting and will clear up on its own without the need for treatment.
Exceptions	'Red Flag' symptoms. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	<p>Treatments for conjunctivitis can be purchased over the counter however almost half of all simple cases of conjunctivitis clear up within ten days without any treatment.</p> <p>Public Health England (PHE) advises that children with infective conjunctivitis do not need to be excluded from school, nursery or child minders, and it does not state any requirement for treatment with topical antibiotics.</p>
Treatment available on local MAS?	<p>Yes</p> <p>Example: Chloramphenicol 0.5% eye drops for acute bacterial conjunctivitis.</p>

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Chloramphenicol 0.5% eye drops Chloramphenicol 1% eye ointment	Brochlor® Golden eye® chloramphenicol eye oint Optrex® Infected eye oint	Children under 2 years Pregnancy & breastfeeding

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Self-Limiting Condition	<b>Coughs &amp; Colds And Nasal Congestion</b>
Rationale	Most colds start to improve in 7 to 10 days. Most coughs clear up within two to three weeks. Both conditions can cause nasal congestion. Neither condition requires any treatment.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of coughs, colds and nasal congestion should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is self-limiting and will clear up on its own without the need for treatment.
Exceptions	'Red Flag' symptoms. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	These conditions do not require any treatment. However, some over the counter medicines help relieve short term fevers and nasal congestion.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Examples: Simple linctus, Paracetamol tabs/suspension, Pseudoephedrine linctus 30mg/5ml, etc.

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Paracetamol 500mg tablets and capsules Paracetamol 120mg/5ml suspension (from 3 months) sugar free Paracetamol 250mg/5ml suspension (from 6 years old)	Anadin paracetamol® Mandalol® Panadol® Hedex® Calpol®	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
Ibuprofen 200mg, 400mg capsules/ tablets Ibuprofen 100mg/5ml oral suspension	Anadin Ibuprofen® Nurofen® Calprofen® Cuprofen® Anadin Joint pain®	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

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Pseudoephedrine or pseudoephedrine-containing preparations	Sudafed® Benadryl Allergy Relief Plus Decongestant® Galpseud®	Children under 12 years Pregnancy, breastfeeding Severe hypertension or severe coronary artery disease Severe renal impairment Phaeochromocytoma Diabetes Hyperthyroidism Closed angle glaucoma
Paracetamol 1000mg/ Pholcodine 10mg/ Pseudoephedrine HCL 60mg in 30ml oral solution Paracetamol 500mg/ Pholcodine 5mg/ Pseudoephedrine HCL 30mg capsules	Day Nurse® Oral Solution Day Nurse® Capsules	Children under 16 years Severe hypertension or severe coronary artery disease Severe renal impairment Hyper excitability Pregnancy, breastfeeding

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Self-Limiting Condition	<b>Cradle Cap (Seborrhoeic dermatitis – infants)</b>
Rationale	Cradle cap is harmless and doesn't usually itch or cause discomfort. It usually appears in babies in the first two months of their lives, and clears up without treatment within weeks to a few months.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of cradle cap should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is self-limiting and will clear up on its own without the need for treatment.
Exceptions	If causing distress to the infant and not improving. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Cradle cap treatment should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is self-limiting and will clear up on its own without the need for treatment.
Treatment available on MAS?	No

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Emulsifying ointment and shampoo	Capasal® Therapeutic Shampoo Dentinox® Cradle Cap Treatment Shampoo Boots Cradle Cap Cream® Infaderm® Shampoo Johnson's® Baby Oil	If the cradle cap has spread to the face Do not use on broken skin or infected skin

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Self-Limiting Condition	<b>Haemorrhoids</b>
Rationale	In many cases, haemorrhoids don't cause symptoms and some people don't even realise they have them. Haemorrhoids often clear up by themselves after a few days. Making simple dietary changes and not straining on the toilet are often recommended first.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of haemorrhoids should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is self-limiting and will clear up on its own without the need for treatment.
Exceptions	'Red Flag' symptoms. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Treatments (creams, ointments and suppositories) can reduce itching and discomfort and these are available over the counter for purchase.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Examples: Anusol® ointment/suppositories, Anusol® Plus HC ointment/suppositories

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Zinc oxide preparations	Anusol® cream, ointment and suppositories Germoloids® cream, ointment and suppositories	Not recommended for children (Anusol®) Children under 12 years (Germoloids®) Pregnancy, breastfeeding Rectal bleeding or blood in stools

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Self-Limiting Condition	<b>Infant colic</b>
Rationale	As colic eventually improves on its own, medical treatment isn't usually recommended. There are some over-the-counter treatments available that could be tried however; there is limited evidence for the effectiveness of these treatments.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of infant colic should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is self-limiting and will clear up on its own without the need for treatment.
Exceptions	'Red Flag' Symptoms. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	There are some over the counter treatments available that could be tried. However, there is limited evidence for the effectiveness of these treatments. The most useful intervention is support for parents and reassurance that colic will resolve.
Treatment available on MAS?	No

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Simeticone 40mg/ml	Infacol®	No restrictions
Dimeticone 42mg/5ml	Dentinox® colic drops	Fructose, glucose-galactose, or sucrose intolerant patients (contains sucrose)

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Self-Limiting Condition	<b>Mild Cystitis</b>
Rationale	Mild cystitis is a common type of urinary tract inflammation, normally caused by an infection; however it is usually more of a nuisance than a cause for serious concern. Mild cases can be defined as those that are responsive to symptomatic treatment but will also clear up on their own. If symptoms don't improve in 3 days, despite self-care measures, then the patient should be advised to see their GP. Symptomatic treatment using products that reduce the acidity of the urine to reduce symptoms are available, but there's a lack of evidence to suggest they're effective.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of mild cystitis should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is self-limiting and will clear up on its own without the need for treatment.
Exceptions	'Red Flag' Symptoms. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Symptomatic treatment using products that reduce the acidity of the urine to reduce symptoms are available, but there is a lack of evidence to suggest they are effective.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Examples: Potassium Citrate and sodium citrate sachets for >16 years

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Sodium citrate 4g sachet	CanesOasis cystitis relief granules® Boots cystitis relief® sachets	Men Children under 16 years Diabetes Heart disease Hypertension Renal disease Pregnancy, breastfeeding
Potassium citrate 1.5g liquid, 3g sachet , 1.5g tablet (effervescent)	Cymaclear® Cystopurin® Effercitrate®	Children under 6 years Renal disease/impairment Pregnancy, breastfeeding

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## Minor conditions suitable for self-care

Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Mild irritant dermatitis</b>
Rationale	Irritant dermatitis is a type of eczema triggered by contact with a particular substance. Once treated most people can expect their symptoms to improve and/or clear up completely if the irritant or allergen can be identified and removed or avoided. It is most commonly caused by irritants such as soaps, washing powders, detergents, solvents or regular contact with water.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of contact dermatitis should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Treatment normally involves avoiding the allergen or irritant and treating symptoms with over the counter emollients and topical corticosteroids.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Examples: Zeroderm® ointment, Hydrocortisone 1% cream, Crotamiton 10% cream

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Emollients Crotamiton Steroid-containing preparations such as hydrocortisone	Eurax® Eurax-HC® Cream Hc45 Hydrocortisone Cream®	Children under 12 years with certain brands however: 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 Use on ano-genital region

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Dandruff</b>
Rationale	Dandruff is a common skin condition. It can be defined as mild scaling of the scalp without itching. Dandruff isn't contagious or harmful and can be easily treated with over the counter antifungal shampoos.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment for dandruff should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Mild dandruff can be easily treated with over the counter antifungal shampoos. Long term treatment is usually required.
Treatment available on local MAS?	No

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Ketoconazole-containing shampoo	Ketoconazole-containing shampoo	Pregnancy, breastfeeding Children under 12 years
Coal tar shampoo	Polytar® scalp shampoo Capasal™ Therapeutic Shampoo Alphosyl® '2 in 1' shampoo	Pregnancy, breastfeeding Children under 12 years Infected open skin lesions Sore or acute pustular psoriasis
Selenium sulfide shampoo	Selsun® Shampoo	Pregnancy, breastfeeding Children under 5 years

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Diarrhoea (Adults only)</b>
Rationale	Diarrhoea normally affects most people from time to time and is usually nothing to worry about. However it can take a few days to a week to clear up. Acute diarrhoea is usually caused by a bacterial or viral infection and other causes include drugs, anxiety or a food allergy.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment for acute diarrhoea will not routinely be offered in primary care for adults as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None. See also OTC sale restrictions. This recommendation does not apply to children.
Advice to patients	Over the counter treatments can help replace lost fluids or reduce bowel motions.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Example: Dioralyte sachets

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Oral rehydration solutions/sachets	Dioralyte® Relief Sachets	Children under 2 years Liver or renal disease Low potassium/sodium diets Diabetes
Loperamide 2mg capsules	Imodium® Dioraleze® Entrocalm® Diafix®	Children under 12 years Inflammatory bowel disease Post bowel surgery Post pelvic radiation Colorectal cancer Pregnancy/breastfeeding

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Dry eyes/sore tired eyes</b>
Rationale	Dry eye syndrome, or dry eye disease, is a common condition that occurs when the eyes don't make enough tears, or the tears evaporate too quickly. Most cases of sore tired eyes resolve themselves. Patients should be encouraged to manage both dry eyes and sore eyes by implementing some self-care measures such as good eyelid hygiene and avoidance of environmental factors alongside treatment. Mild to moderate cases of dry eye syndrome or sore tired eyes can usually be treated using lubricant eye treatments that consist of a range of drops, gels and ointments that can be easily be purchased over the counter.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of dry or sore eyes should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	Pre-existing long-term conditions affecting the eyes. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Patients should be encouraged to manage both dry eyes and sore eyes by implementing some self-care measures such as good eyelid hygiene and avoidance of environmental factors alongside treatment. Mild to moderate cases of dry eye syndrome or sore tired eyes can usually be treated using lubricant eye treatments that consist of a range of drops, gels and ointments that can be easily be purchased over the counter.
Treatment available on local MAS?	No

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Hypromellose 0.3%	Tears Naturale® Eye Drops Isopto®- Plain	Children under 18 years (Carbomer) Pregnancy, breastfeeding (check individual brands)
Carbomer	Viscotears® Liquid Gel Gel Tears® Liquivisc®	
Yellow Soft Paraffin BP/ PhEur Anhydrous Lanolin (Wool Fat) BP/PhEur Liquid Paraffin BP/ PhEur	Simple® Eye Ointment	
Distilled witch-hazel	Optrex® Sore Eyes Drops	

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Earwax</b>
Rationale	Earwax is produced inside ears to keep them clean and free of germs. It usually passes out of the ears harmlessly, but sometimes too much can build up and block the ears.
Recommendation	A prescription for the removal of earwax should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	Perforated ear drum. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	A build-up of earwax is a common problem that can often be treated using eardrops bought over the counter. These can help soften the earwax so that it falls out naturally.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes. Example: Olive oil ear drops

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Olive oil drops Arachis oil/ chlorobutanol hemihydrate drops Docusate sodium 0.5% drops	Cerumol® Waxsol®	Cerumol®: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Peanut allergy</li> <li>● Otitis externa, seborrhoeic dermatitis and eczema affecting the outer ear.</li> </ul> Waxsol®: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Inflammation of the ear</li> </ul>

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Excessive sweating (hyperhidrosis)</b>
Rationale	Hyperhidrosis is a common condition in which a person sweats excessively. First line treatment involves simple lifestyle changes. It can also be treated with over the counter high strength antiperspirants.
Recommendation	A prescription for high strength antiperspirants for the treatment of mild to moderate hyperhidrosis should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	An antiperspirant containing aluminium chloride is usually the first line of antiperspirant treatment and is sold in most pharmacies. Things you can do to help with excessive sweating are: Do <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wear loose-fitting clothes to minimise signs of sweating</li> <li>• Wear socks that absorb moisture and change your socks at least twice a day if possible</li> <li>• Wear leather shoes and try to wear different shoes day to day</li> </ul> Don't <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wear tight clothes or man-made fabrics – for example, nylon</li> <li>• Wear enclosed boots or sports shoes that may cause your feet to sweat more</li> <li>• Do things that might make your sweating worse – for example, drinking alcohol or eating spicy food</li> </ul>
Treatment available on MAS?	No

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Aluminium chloride	Driclor® Anhydrol™ Forte®	Broken or infected skin External use only

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Head lice</b>
Rationale	Head lice are a common problem, particularly in school children aged 4-11. They're largely harmless, but can live in the hair for a long time if not treated and can be irritating and frustrating to deal with. Live head lice can be treated by wet combing; chemical treatment is only recommended in exceptional circumstances and in these cases over the counter medicines can be purchased from a pharmacy. If appropriate everyone in the household needs to be treated at the same time - even if they don't have symptoms. Further information on how to treat head lice without medication can be found on NHS Choices.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of head lice will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care
Exceptions	Current conditions of scalp. Side effects of severe infestation. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	It is not always possible to prevent head lice infestation, as they are spread by close head to head contact, especially when children are playing. However, these self-care tips will help with detection and prevention. Frequent checking - carefully looking at your child's scalp and hair for head lice, especially at the start of the school year. Ideally do this weekly. 'Wet combing'- Wash hair as usual then use conditioner, do not wash this off. Use a normal comb to untangle hair, then a fine-toothed head lice detection comb to remove live head lice. Avoid sharing - Hats, combs, hairbrushes, towels, pillows. Hair length - People with longer hair are more likely to catch head lice, simply because it is easier for the head lice to transfer to and from longer hair. Head lice eradication products containing alcohol: there is a risk of serious burns if treated hair is exposed to open flames or other sources of ignition e.g. cigarettes.
Treatment available on local MAS?	No

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Dimeticone gel, lotion or spray 4%	Hedrin® Nyda®	Children under 6 months Pregnancy, breastfeeding
Malathion Aqueous lotion 0.5%	Derbac-M®	Avoid use on broken or inflamed skin
Conditioner / head lice combs	Various	None

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Indigestion and heartburn</b>
Rationale	Most people have indigestion at some point. Usually, it's not a sign of anything more serious and can be treated at home without the need for medical advice, as it's often mild and infrequent and specialist treatment isn't required
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of Indigestion and heartburn will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	'Red flag' symptoms. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Most people are able to manage their indigestion by making simple diet and lifestyle changes, or taking medication such as antacids. Most people can ease symptoms by simple changes to diet and lifestyle and avoiding foods that make indigestion worse. (E.g. rich spicy or fatty foods, caffeinated drinks).
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes. Examples: Gaviscon advance tabs/liquid, Ranitidine 75 mg tabs

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Sodium alginate Calcium carbonate Sodium bicarbonate	Gaviscon® tablets Gaviscon Double action® Acidex®	Children under 12 years Renal failure Hypercalcaemia Nephrocalcinosis Kidney stones
	Gaviscon Infant® (for infants aged 1-2 years)	Children under 12 months or over 2 years Premature infant (born before 37 weeks) Renal impairment
Esomeprazole 20mg tablets Pantoprazole 20mg tablets	Nexium Control® Pantoloc Control®	Children under 18 years Adults over 55 years Pregnancy, breastfeeding Jaundice or liver disease
Ranitidine 75mg tablets	Zantac® Gavilast® Ranicalm®	Children under 16 years Peptic ulceration Elderly taking NSAIDs Pregnancy, breastfeeding

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Infrequent Constipation</b>
Rationale	Constipation can affect people of all ages and can be just for a short period of time. It can be effectively managed with a change in diet or lifestyle. Pharmacists can help if diet and lifestyle changes aren't helping. They can suggest an over the counter laxative. Most laxatives work within 3 days. They should be used for a short time only. 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
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of simple constipation will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	It can be effectively managed with a change in diet or lifestyle and short term use of over the counter laxatives.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes. Examples: Lactulose, Ispaghula sachets, Senna 7.5 mg tabs, Glycerol suppositories

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Lactulose	Duphalac® Lactugal®	Galactosaemia Gastro-intestinal obstruction, digestive perforation or risk of digestive perforation
Bisacodyl tablets 5mg	Dulcolax®	Acute inflammatory bowel diseases Severe dehydration Pregnancy and breastfeeding Children under 10 years
Senna	Senokot® Dual Relief Tablets	Severe dehydration Children under 6 years (tablets) Children under 2 years( syrup) Pregnancy, breastfeeding
Ispaghula Husk Granules	Fybogel® Ispagel® Manevac®	Children under 6 years Diabetes

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Infrequent migraine</b>
Rationale	Migraine is a common health condition, affecting around one in every five women and around one in every 15 men. Mild infrequent migraines can be adequately treated with over the counter pain killers. Patients with severe or recurrent migraines should continue to seek advice from their GP
Recommendation	A prescription for the treatment of mild migraine should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Mild infrequent migraines can be adequately treated with over the counter painkillers and a number of combination medicines for migraine are available that contain both painkillers and anti-sickness medicines.
Treatment available on local MAS?	No

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Prochlorperazine maleate	Buccastem® M Tab 3mg	Impaired liver function Existing blood dyscrasias Epilepsy Parkinson's Disease Prostatic hypertrophy Narrow angle glaucoma Pregnancy, breastfeeding Children under 18 years
Paracetamol 500mg tablets and capsules Paracetamol 500mg/5ml oral solution Paracetamol 500mg soluble tablets	Anadin paracetamol® Mandanol® Panadol® Hedex®	Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief Children under 10 years(Panadol® ) Children under 6 years( Hedex® & Anadin paracetamol®) Severe renal or severe hepatic impairment
Ibuprofen 200mg, 400mg capsules and tablets Ibuprofen 100mg/5ml liquid/suspension sugar free	Anadin® Ibuprofen Nurofen® Calprofen® Cuprofen®	Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief Asthma Unstable high blood pressure Taking anticoagulants

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		Stomach ulcer, perforation or bleeding (active or history of) Renal impairment Hepatic impairment Cardiac impairment Children under 12 years Pregnancy, breastfeeding
Co-codamol 8/500mg tablets, capsules, effervescent tablets	Migraleve® Yellow tablets Paracodol®	Children under 12 years Severe liver disease Pregnancy, breastfeeding

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Insect bites and stings</b>
Rationale	Most insect bites and stings are not serious and will get better within a few hours or days.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment for insect bites and stings will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Over-the-counter treatments can help ease symptoms, such as painkillers, creams for itching and antihistamines.
Treatment available on local MAS?	No

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Mepyramine maleate 2%	Anthisan® Bite & Sting cream 2%	Broken or infected skin Children under 2 years Eczematous skin conditions
Lidocaine hydrochloride/zinc sulphate/cetrimide	Savlon® Bites & Stings Pain Relief Gel	Broken or infected skin Children under 12 years Animal bites
Calamine/zinc oxide	Calamine lotion®	Broken or infected skin
Chloroxylenol/ triclosan/edetic acid	Dettol® antiseptic cream	Dermatitis, eczema or other skin complaints

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Mild acne</b>
Rationale	Acne is a common skin condition that affects most people at some point. Although acne can't be cured, it can be controlled with treatment. Several creams, lotions and gels for treating acne are available from pharmacies.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of mild acne will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	To manage mild acne with long term use of over the counter products. Treatments can take up to three months to work.
Treatment available on local MAS?	No

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Benzoyl peroxide containing preparations	Acnecide® gel/wash Quinoderm® cream	Pregnancy, breastfeeding Damaged skin Elderly Children under 12 years

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Mild dry skin</b>
Rationale	Emollients are often used to help manage dry, itchy or scaly skin conditions
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of dry skin should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Mild dry skin conditions can be successfully managed using over the counter products on a long term basis.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Examples : Zerobase <sup>®</sup> , Zeroderm <sup>®</sup>

OTC Medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Emollients, creams and ointments	Balneum Plus <sup>®</sup> Cetraben <sup>®</sup> Dermol <sup>®</sup> E45 <sup>®</sup> Oilatum <sup>®</sup>	Broken or inflamed skin Cetraben <sup>®</sup> Cream and lotion over 1 year olds E45 for children over 1 month old

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Sunburn due to excessive sun exposure</b>
Rationale	Most people manage sun burn symptoms themselves or prevent symptoms developing using sun protection, with products that can easily be bought in a pharmacy or supermarket.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of sunburn should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Cool your skin by having a cold bath or shower, sponging it with cold water or holding a flannel to it. Use lotions containing aloe vera to soothe and moisturise the skin and drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration. Take painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen to relieve the pain if required.
Treatments available on local MAS?	Yes Examples: Calamine cream, Paracetamol tabs/suspension for <16 years only

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Calamine lotion		None
After-sun preparations	Various	

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Sun Protection</b>
Rationale	Most people manage sun burn symptoms themselves or prevent symptoms developing using sun protection, with products that can easily be bought in a pharmacy or supermarket
Recommendation	A prescription for sun protection should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	ACBS approved indication of photodermatoses (i.e. where skin protection should be prescribed). See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Sun protection products can readily be bought in a pharmacy or supermarket
Treatment available for local MAS?	No

<b>OTC medication</b>	<b>Common OTC brands</b>	<b>OTC sale restrictions</b>
Sun protection cream/ sprays/gels	Various	None

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Mild to moderate Hay fever/Seasonal Rhinitis</b>
Rationale	Hay fever is a common allergic condition that affects up to one in five people
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of mild to moderate hay fever will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	There's currently no cure for hay fever, but most people with mild to moderate symptoms are able to relieve symptoms with OTC treatments recommended by a pharmacist.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Examples: Cetirizine liquid/tabs, Chlorphenamine syrup/tabs, Loratadine syrup/tabs, Sodium cromoglycate 2% gutt

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Chlorphenamine 4mg tablets Chlorphenamine 2mg/5ml solution	Piriton®	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
Loratadine 10mg tablets Loratadine 5mg/5ml syrup	Clarityn Allergy®	Children under 2 years or body weight < 30 kg-tablets, children under 2 years – syrup Pregnancy, breastfeeding Liver impairment Rare hereditary problems of galactose intolerance, the Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose- galactose malabsorption

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Acrivastine 8mg capsules	Benadryl Allergy Relief®	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
Cetirizine 10mg tablets Cetirizine 1mg/ml solution	Zirtek Allergy Relief® Piriteze Allergy® Benadryl Allergy®	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
Beclomethasone 0.05% nasal spray	Beconase Hayfever®	Children under 18 years Pregnancy, breastfeeding Recent injury/surgery to nose
Sodium cromoglycate 2% eye drops	Allercrom® Optrex Hayfever Relief®	Children under 6 years Pregnancy, breastfeeding

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Minor burns and scalds</b>
Rationale	Burns and scalds are damage to the skin caused by heat. Both are treated in the same way. Depending on how serious a burn is, it is possible to treat burns at home. Antiseptic creams and treatments for burns should be included in any products kept in a medicine cabinet at home.
Recommendation	A prescription for minor burns and scalds should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	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> See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Antiseptic creams and treatments for burns should be kept in a medicine cabinet at home.
Treatment available on local MAS?	No

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Antiseptic burn cream Cooling burn gel	Betadine® Dry Powder Spray  Germolene® Antiseptic Cream Germolene® Antiseptic Ointment Savlon® Antiseptic Cream Sudocrem® Antiseptic Healing Cream	Pregnancy, breastfeeding Children under 2 years Lithium therapy  Broken or infected skin

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Minor conditions associated with pain</b>
Rationale	In most cases, headaches, period pain, mild fever and back pain can be treated at home with over-the-counter painkillers and lifestyle changes, such as getting more rest and drinking enough fluids. 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.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of conditions associated with pain, discomfort and mild fever will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Patients should be encouraged to keep a small supply of OTC analgesics in their medicines cabinets at home so they are able to manage minor ailments at home without the need for a GP appointment.
Treatments available on local MAS?	Yes. Example: for acute fever/acute pain/earache/headache: Ibuprofen/paracetamol

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Paracetamol 500mg tablets and capsules	Anadin paracetamol®	Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief
Paracetamol 120mg/5ml suspension (from 3 months)/sugar free	Mandanol®	Children under 2 months
Paracetamol 250mg/5ml suspension (from 6 years old)/sugar free	Panadol®	Babies born before 37 weeks
Ibuprofen 200mg, 400mg tablets, capsules, liquid capsules	Hedex®	Babies weighing less than 4kg
Ibuprofen 100mg/5ml liquid/suspension sugar free	Calpol®	Severe renal or severe hepatic impairment
	Anadin Ibuprofen®	Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief
	Nurofen®	Asthma
	Calprofen®	Unstable high blood pressure
	Cuprofen®	Taking anticoagulants
	Anadin Joint Pain®	Stomach ulcer, perforation or bleeding (active or history of)
		Children under 3 month
		Renal impairment
		Hepatic impairment
		Cardiac impairment
		Pregnancy, breastfeeding

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Co-codamol 8/500mg tablets, capsules, effervescent tablets	Migraleve® Yellow tablets Paracodol®	Not for use in chicken pox Children under 12 years Severe liver disease Pregnancy, breastfeeding
Ibuprofen 5% gel	Fenbid® Ibuleve® Nurofen®	Children under 14 years Pregnancy, breastfeeding Broken/infected skin

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Mouth Ulcers</b>
Rationale	Mouth ulcers/sore mouth are usually harmless and do not need to be treated because most clear up by themselves within a week or two. Mouth ulcers and sore mouth are common and can usually be managed at home, without seeing your dentist or GP.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of mouth ulcers or sore mouth will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	Palliative care patients. See OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	OTC treatment can help to reduce swelling and ease any discomfort.
Treatments available on local MAS?	Yes Anbesol teething gel, Bonjela, Chlorhexidine mouth wash, Paracetamol,

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Lidocaine hydrochloride/ chlorocresol/ cetylpyridinium chloride	Bonjela® Anbesol®	Children under 16 years Active peptic ulceration
Choline salicylate/ cetalkonium chloride Benzocaine	Orajel®	Pregnancy, breastfeeding

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Nappy Rash</b>
Rationale	Up to a third of babies and toddlers in nappies have nappy rash at any one time. Nappy rash can usually be treated at home using barrier creams purchased at the supermarket or pharmacy.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment for nappy rash will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Nappy rash can usually be treated at home using a barrier cream. Nappy rash usually clears up after about three days if recommended hygiene tips are followed.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Clotrimazole 1% cream, Conotrane® cream

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Titanium dioxide/ titanium peroxide/ titanium salicylate	Metanium® Nappy Rash ointment	None
Zinc oxide/ benzyl alcohol/ benzylbenzoate/ lanolin	Sudocrem® Antiseptic Healing Cream	None

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Oral Thrush</b>
Rationale	Oral Thrush is a minor condition that can be treated without the need for a GP consultation or prescription in the first instance. It is common in babies and older people with dentures or those using steroid inhalers.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment for oral thrush will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Oral thrush can easily be treated with over the counter gel.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Miconazole oral gel 2%

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Miconazole 2% oral gel 15g	Daktarin® Oral Gel	Children under 4 months Pregnancy, breastfeeding Patients taking warfarin Liver dysfunction

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Prevention of dental caries</b>
Rationale	The dentist may advise on using higher-strength fluoride toothpaste if you are particularly at risk of tooth decay.
Recommendation	A prescription for high fluoride OTC toothpaste should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Some higher fluoride toothpastes (~1500 ppm) and mouthwashes can be purchased over the counter. Prescription only preparations need to be re-directed to a dentist to prescribe.
Treatment available on local MAS?	No

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Mouthwashes such as chlorhexidine gluconate	Corsodyl®	Children under 12 years
Hexetidine mouthwash	Oraldene® Mouthwash	Children under 6 years
Sodium fluoride mouthwash, oral drops, tablets & toothpaste	Endekay® fluoride mouth rinse Fluorigard® fluoride rinse	Children over 6 years Children over 6 years
Hydrogen Peroxide Mouthwash	Peroxyl Mouthwash 1.5% Hydrogen peroxide 6% oral solution	Children over 6 years

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Ringworm/Athlete's foot</b>
Rationale	Ringworm is a common fungal infection that can cause a red or silvery ring-like rash on the skin. Despite its name, ringworm doesn't have anything to do with worms. Athlete's foot is a rash caused by a fungus that usually appears between the toes. These fungal infections, medically known as "tinea", are not serious and are usually easily treated with over the counter treatments. However, they are contagious and easily spread so it is important to practice good foot hygiene.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of ringworm or athletes foot will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	Lymphoedema or history of lower limb cellulitis. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	These fungal infections, medically known as "tinea", are not serious and are usually easily treated with over the counter treatments. However, they are contagious and easily spread so it is important to practice good foot hygiene.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Example for Athletes' foot: Clotrimazole 1% cream

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Miconazole 2% cream	Daktarin®	Diabetes
Miconazole powder	Daktarin Powder	Pregnancy, breastfeeding
Miconazole 0.16% spray powder	Daktarin Aktiv®	
Terbinafine hydrochloride 1%	Lamisil® AT cream, gel, spray Scholl® Athlete's Foot powder, spray liquid	Children under 16 years Diabetes Pregnancy, breastfeeding
Miconazole 2% + Hydrocortisone 1%	Daktacort Hydrocortisone cream 15 gm	Children under 10 years
Clotrimazole 1% + Hydrocortisone 1%	Canesten Hydrocortisone cream 15 gm	Broken skin Viral and tuberculous skin condition

Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Scabies</b>
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Rationale	Scabies is not usually a serious skin condition. It is very infectious though and it can take up to 8 weeks for a rash to appear. A pharmacist can recommend OTC products to patients. Everyone in the household needs to be treated, even if they don't have symptoms.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of scabies will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care
Exceptions	Infestations can be treated with Permethrin cream. See also OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Community pharmacists can recommend OTC products for treating scabies. Everyone in the household needs to be treated, even if they don't have symptoms. Anybody who has had sexual contact with the patient in the past 8 weeks needs to be treated too.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes. Permethrin 5% dermal cream, Crotamiton cream, Chlorphenamine.

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Crotamiton 10% cream	Eurax <sup>®</sup>	Pregnancy, breastfeeding Children under 3 years Broken skin
Chlorphenamine 4mg tablets; Chlorphenamine oral solution 2mg/5ml(sugar free)	Allercalm <sup>®</sup> , Hayleve, Piriton Allergy <sup>®</sup> tablets 4mg, Piriton <sup>®</sup> tablets 4mg, Pollenase <sup>®</sup> tablets	Children under 1 year -solution ; Children under 6 years-tablets Pregnancy, breast feeding Patients with rare hereditary problems of galactose intolerance, Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose-galactose malabsorption
Permethrin 5% dermal cream	Lyclear <sup>®</sup> , Lythrin <sup>®</sup>	Babies under 2 months

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Teething/mild toothache</b>
Rationale	Teething can be distressing for some babies, but there are ways to make it easier for them. Teething gels often contain a mild local anaesthetic, which helps to numb any pain or discomfort caused by teething and these can be purchased from a pharmacy. If baby is in pain or has a mild raised temperature (less than 38°C) then paracetamol or ibuprofen suspension can be given. Toothache can come and go or be constant. Eating or drinking can make the pain worse, particularly if the food or drink is hot or cold. Mild toothache in adults can also be treated with over the counter painkillers whilst awaiting a dental appointment for further investigation.
Recommendation	A prescription for teething in babies or toothache in children and adults will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Teething gels often contain a mild local anaesthetic, which helps to numb any pain or discomfort caused by teething and these can be purchased from a pharmacy. If the baby is in pain or has a mild raised temperature (less than 38°C) then paracetamol or ibuprofen suspension can be given. Mild toothache in adults can also be treated with over the counter painkillers.
Treatment available on local MAS?	No

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Paracetamol 500mg tablets, capsules, effervescent tablets Paracetamol 120mg/5ml suspension (from 3 months) sugar free Paracetamol 250mg/5ml suspension (from 6 years old) sugar free	Anadin Paracetamol® Mandanol® Panadol® Hedex® Calpol®	Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief Children under 2 months-Calpol suspension Children under 6 years : Hedex® , Anadin® paracetamol Children less than 10 years: Mandanol®, Panadol® tabs Babies born before 37 weeks Babies weighing less than 4 kg Severe renal or severe hepatic impairment
Ibuprofen 200mg, 400mg capsules and tablets Ibuprofen 100mg/5ml liquid sugar free	Anadin Ibuprofen® Nurofen® Calprofen® Cuprofen®	Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief Asthma Unstable high blood pressure Taking anticoagulants

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	Anadin® Joint Pain	Stomach ulcer, perforation or bleeding (active or history of) Children less than 12 years- all brands of tablets listed Children under 3 months- Calprofen® suspension Renal impairment Hepatic impairment Cardiac impairment Pregnancy, breastfeeding Avoid the use in chicken pox
Teething gel	Bonjela® Dentinox® Teething Gel	Babies under 5 months- Dentinox® Children less than 16 years- Bonjela® Heart disease Liver disease Active peptic ulceration

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Threadworms</b>
Rationale	Threadworms (pinworms) are tiny worms in your stools. They are common in children and can be spread easily. They can be effectively treated without the need to visit the GP. Treatment for threadworms can easily be bought from pharmacies. This is usually a chewable tablet or liquid you - swallow. Strict hygiene measures can also help clear up a threadworm infection and reduce the likelihood of reinfection. Everyone in the household will require treatment, even if they don't have symptoms.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of threadworm should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Treatment for threadworms can easily be bought from pharmacies. This is usually a chewable tablet or liquid formulation. Strict hygiene measures can also help clear up a threadworm infection and reduce the likelihood of reinfection. Everyone in the household will require treatment, even if they do not have symptoms.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Example: Mebendazole 100 mg tab

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Mebendazole 100mg tablets	Ovex®	Children under 2 years Pregnancy, breastfeeding

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Travel Sickness</b>
Rationale	Mild motion sickness can be treated by various self-care measures (e.g. stare at a fixed object, fresh air, listen to music etc.); more severe motion sickness can be treated with over the counter medicines.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment for motion sickness will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Severe motion sickness can be treated with over the counter medicines.
Treatment available on local MAS?	No

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sale restrictions
Cinnarizine tablets 15mg	Stugeron® Tablets 15mg	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
Hyoscine hydrobromide tablets 150mcg	Joy-Rides® Tablets Chewable 150mcg Kwells 300mcg tablets Kwells Kids® Tablets 150mcg	Children under 3 years (Joyrides®) under 4 years (Kwells Kids®) Epilepsy Glaucoma Pregnancy, breastfeeding Paralytic ileus, pyloric stenosis, prostatic enlargement Myasthenia gravis

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Self-Limiting Condition	<b>Vaginal Thrush</b>
Rationale	Vaginal thrush is a common yeast infection that affects most women at some point in time. It is usually harmless, but can be uncomfortable and can recur. It can be easily treated with medication available from pharmacies.
Recommendation	Do not prescribe creams or combi preparations on FP10 for vaginal thrush. Restrict prescribing to pessaries and oral antifungals for vaginal thrush
Exceptions	Recurrent infections Pregnancy and breastfeeding Diabetic patients Immunocompromised patients-HIV, chemotherapy See also OTC sale restrictions
Advice to patients	Medication can be purchased from a pharmacy to get rid of vaginal thrush. Partner should be treated if they have symptoms. To prevent infections, advise patients to use emollients instead of soap and water to wash vagina, shower (rather than bath), wear cotton underwear, avoid sex till thrush has cleared up, and to use condoms to prevent spread.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Examples: Clotrimazole 2% cream, Clotrimazole 500 mg pessary, Fluconazole 150 mg caps

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sales restrictions
Clotrimazole cream 1%	Canesten®	Pregnancy.
Clotrimazole pessary 500mg	Canesten Combi®	Breast feeding
Fluconazole 150mg caps	Canesten® oral Diflucan®	Children under 16. Adults over 60 Diabetic patients Recurrent infections (more than 2 in 6 months)

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Condition suitable for self-care	<b>Warts and Verrucae</b>
Rationale	Most people will have warts at some point in their life. They are generally harmless and tend to go away on their own eventually.
Recommendation	A prescription for treatment of warts and verrucae will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
Exceptions	None, however see OTC sale restrictions.
Advice to patients	Several treatments can be purchased from a pharmacy to get rid of warts and verrucae more quickly if patients require treatment.
Treatment available on local MAS?	Yes Examples: Salactol Topical Paint

OTC medication	Common OTC brands	OTC sales restrictions
Verruca gel such as those containing salicylic acid and lactic acid	Bazuka® Extra strength gel Bazuka® Gel Bazuka® Treatment Gel Bazuka Extra Strength® Treatment Gel	Diabetes patients Face, neck, ano-genital area Moles, birthmarks, hairy warts or skin lesions Broken skin
Wart paint/ointment such as those containing salicylic acid and lactic acid	Salactol Collodion® Occlusal® Salatac® Verrugon® ointment	Impaired peripheral blood circulation
Wart freeze treatments containing liquid freezing agents such as dimethyl ether, propane and isobutane	Scholl® Freeze Bazuka® Sub Zero	As for Verruca gel/wart paint In addition, children under 4years

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