

**Changes to over the counter medicines applies to treatments for the following conditions**

Acute sore throat	Conjunctivitis
Coughs, colds and nasal congestion	Cradle cap
Dandruff	Diarrhoea (adults)
Dry eyes / sore tired eyes	Earwax
Haemorrhoids	Head lice
Infant colic	Infrequent cold sores of the lip
Infrequent migraine	Insect bites and stings
Minor burns and scalds	Mild cystitis
Mild irritant dermatitis	Minor pain, discomfort and fever (e.g. aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain)
Mouth ulcers	Prevention of tooth decay
Oral thrush	Sun protection
Sunburn	Travel sickness
Threadworms	Excessive sweating
Mild to moderate hay fever	Indigestion and heartburn
Nappy rash	Infrequent constipation
Ringworm / athletes foot	Mild acne
Teething / mild toothache	Mild dry skin
Warts and verrucae	

Your local pharmacy team can tell you how long to expect the symptoms of your condition to last. If they haven't improved after this time, or you feel worse, you should:

- 1 Go back to your pharmacy for further advice
- 2 Call NHS111
- 3 Contact your GP

**A&E and 999 should only be used for serious and life-threatening emergencies**

Find out more about the changes to the prescription policy at [www.nhs.uk/OTCmedicines](http://www.nhs.uk/OTCmedicines)

# Prescribing of over the counter medicines is changing

This leaflet explains the changes to prescribing to help use NHS resources responsibly

Your GP, nurse or pharmacist will not generally give you a prescription for over the counter medicines for a range of minor health concerns.

Instead, over the counter medicines are available to buy in a pharmacy or supermarket in your local community.

The team of health professionals at your local pharmacy can offer help and clinical advice to manage minor health concerns. If your symptoms suggest it's more serious, they will ensure you get the care that you need.

You can find a local pharmacy at [www.nhs.uk/service-search](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search)

## Exceptions to new prescription rules

These changes may differ for those with a long-term condition. You may still be prescribed a medicine for a condition on the list if:

- You need treatment for a long-term condition such as regular pain relief, chronic arthritis or inflammatory bowel disease
- You need treatment for more complex forms of minor illnesses where over the counter medicines do not work
- You need over the counter medicine to treat the side effects of a prescription medicine
- The medicine has a license which doesn't allow the product to be sold over the counter to certain groups of patients i.e. babies, children or pregnant women
- The person prescribing thinks the patient cannot treat themselves due to mental health problems or severe social vulnerability.

## How your pharmacy team can help

Pharmacists are qualified healthcare professionals with the knowledge and skills to give clinical advice and help you choose the most appropriate treatment. If your symptoms suggest it's something more serious, they'll ensure you get the care you need.

## What can you do?

Keeping a few useful medicines at home means you can treat common conditions immediately without needing to see a healthcare professional. These could include:

- Painkillers
- Indigestion medicines, oral rehydration salts and treatments for constipation and diarrhoea
- Seasonal colds and hay fever treatments
- Sunblock and after sun
- Basic first aid items i.e. plasters and antiseptic cream

If you have children, make sure you also have products suitable for them. Speak to your local pharmacy team for more advice.