

## Why do I have to buy my own medicine?

In March 2018, after a National consultation, NHS England published national guidelines about reducing prescribing of over the counter medicines for short-term illnesses.

Following the outcome of local and national engagement on over the counter medicines for short term illnesses, the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Groups decided to follow the national guidelines and restrict over the counter medicines on prescription for minor illnesses.

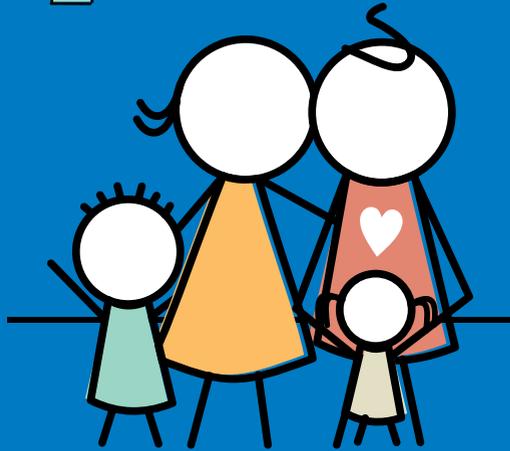
Please note that this is for minor illnesses only and does not apply to those who receive over the counter medicines for long term conditions.

There are exceptions and you may still be prescribed a medicine for a condition on the list overleaf if:

- You need treatment for a long term condition, for example regular pain relief for chronic arthritis or inflammatory bowel disease.
- If minor illnesses become more complex and you need additional treatment.
- You need treatment for more complex forms of minor illnesses, such as migraines that are very bad and where over the counter medicines do not work.
- You need an over the counter medicine to treat a side effect of a prescription medicine or symptom of another illness, for example constipation when taking certain painkillers.
- The medicine has a licence which doesn't allow the product to be sold over the counter to certain groups of patients. This could include babies, children or women who are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Following patient assessment the clinician believes that the patient is unable to treat themselves. This may be due to mental health problems or severe social vulnerability.

For more details visit:

[www.healthandcarenotts.co.uk/your-health-matters/self-care](http://www.healthandcarenotts.co.uk/your-health-matters/self-care)



**Take care of yourself and your NHS will take care of you**

#selfcaresavvy

**Helping you to help yourself**

**A guide to self care**

**No need to wait for a doctor's appointment, you can go straight to your local pharmacy.**

## What is self care?

Self care is looking after yourself in a healthy way, for example taking exercise and eating a healthy diet. It is also about understanding when you can look after yourself, when a pharmacist can help, and when to get advice from your GP or another health professional.

Rather than visit their GP or nurse, most people can take care of themselves when they have common illnesses such as sore throats, coughs etc.

## Pharmacists can also help you to look after yourself.

They can also advise you on over the counter medicines. If your symptoms carry on longer than is normal for a minor illness then make an appointment at your GP Practice.

This leaflet explains a bit more about which conditions can be treated with over the counter medicines and self care.

# Medicines for self care

**The following minor illnesses can be treated effectively and safely using over the counter medicines.**

Treatments for these conditions are no longer recommended on prescription. You can speak to your pharmacist for advice.

- Acute sore throat
- Conjunctivitis
- Coughs, colds and nasal congestion
- Cradle cap
- Dandruff (mild scaling of the scalp without itching)
- Diarrhoea (adults)
- Dry eyes/sore tired eyes
- Earwax
- Excessive sweating (hyperhidrosis)
- Fungal nail infections
- Haemorrhoids
- Head lice
- Infant colic
- Infrequent cold sore of lips
- Indigestion and heartburn
- Infrequent constipation
- Infrequent migraine
- Insect bites/stings
- Mild cystitis
- Mild irritant dermatitis
- Mild acne
- Mild dry skin
- Mild to moderate hay fever/seasonal rhinitis
- Minor burns/scalds
- Minor conditions associated with pain, discomfort and/or fever (e.g. aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain)
- Mouth ulcers
- Nappy rash
- Oral thrush
- Prevention of dental cavities
- Probiotics
- Ringworm/Athlete's foot
- Sunburn due to excessive sun exposure
- Sun protection
- Teething/mild toothache
- Threadworm
- Travel sickness
- Vaginal thrush
- Vitamins and minerals for prevention/maintenance
- Warts and verrucae

## Benefits of self care

### Expert advice to support you

Pharmacists can offer expert advice on a wide range of illnesses and you don't need to make an appointment. Your consultation will be confidential and discreet.

### Save yourself time

There's no need to wait for a GP appointment - a lot of pharmacies are open late and at the weekend.

### Save your GP practice time

Choosing to self care can free up more doctor and nurse time so they can spend more time with patients with more complex conditions.

### Save the NHS money

In 2018/19, practices across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire spent £8.9 million on prescribing over the counter medicines. For minor conditions, many of these medicines are widely available and support and specialist advice is also available from your local community pharmacist.

The money spent on prescriptions for minor illnesses could be spent on treating more serious conditions or developing life-saving treatments.