



ADVICE FOR PATIENTS

Over the Counter Medicines for Short-term Conditions Will No Longer be Routinely Prescribed

The NHS spends approx. £569 million on prescriptions for medicines which could be purchased over the counter (OTC) from a pharmacy, petrol station or Supermarket, at a lower cost than that which would be incurred by the NHS.

In line with guidance from NHS England the Brighton and Hove and High Weald Lewes Havens CCGs are recommending GPs will no longer routinely prescribe medicines for common conditions which can be bought over the counter.

By reducing the spend on treating minor conditions that are self-limiting and encouraging self-care, the NHS can spend the money it will save on treatments that have a greater impact on health

The GP will no longer routinely prescribe:

- Items of limited clinical effectiveness such as probiotics, vitamins and minerals.
- Medications for self-limiting conditions, which do not require any medical advice or treatment as it will clear up on its own, such as cough, sore throat, and colds
- Treatments for a condition that is suitable for self-care, which can be treated with items that can be easily purchased over the counter from a pharmacy, such as indigestion, mouth ulcers, warts and verrucae

Being EXEMPT from paying a PRESCRIPTION CHARGE or having a PRE-PAYMENT CERTIFICATE does not automatically warrant an exception.

Speak to your local pharmacist about stocking up on your medicines cabinet to treat common conditions for you and your family. By keeping a selection of essential medications at home you can treat common conditions in a timely manner; avoid unnecessary trips to see your doctor and/or even visits to the A&E department.

Frequently Asked Questions

I have a prescription for a long-term condition. What does this mean for me?

People who need OTC medicines for a long-term condition will still be able to get them on a prescription. This only applies to the use of medicines and products for short-term conditions. Your GP will continue to prescribe items you need for your long-term condition.

I am worried about the cost of these products

Most self-care treatments and products are available to buy in pharmacies and shops at a lower price than it costs the NHS to provide on a prescription.

How much could the NHS Save?

It is estimated the NHS could save £100 million

What is Self-care?

Self-care is the actions that individuals take for themselves, on behalf of and with others in order to develop, protect, maintain and improve their health, well-being or wellness

The following medications can be purchased from pharmacies or your local supermarket.

- Allergy medicines
- Hay fever medicines
- Simple pain killers like paracetamol and ibuprofen
- Heartburn and indigestion remedies
- Pile (haemorrhoid) treatments
- Anti-diarrhoea medication
- Rehydration salts
- First aid kit including plasters and bandages
- Thermometer
- Tissues



Any queries or complaints should be directed to 01273 238 700 or csesca.complaints@nhs.net

The NHS belongs to you so please use it responsibly – #HelpMyNHS

For more information on self-care and local NHS services, visit www.sussexhelpmy.nhs.uk / www.eastsurreyhelpmy.nhs.uk

