

Common medicines available to purchase over the counter (OTC) for minor illnesses and self-limiting conditions

The table below contains a summary of some of the more commonly available medicines available over the counter for minor illnesses and self-limiting conditions. This is not an exhaustive list of all available products. Prescribers and pharmacists are advised to consult [individual product summary of product characteristics \(SPCs\)](#) for comprehensive product information, including all cautions and contraindications. The [PAGB OTC Directory](#) also contains summaries of products available OTC.

Minor illness/ self-limiting condition	Medication available over the counter (OTC) See PAGB OTC Directory or product SPC for information about specific products	Sales classification		Age restrictions	Contraindications
		GSL (general sale)	P (pharmacy only)		
Acute pain, headache, temperature	Paracetamol 500mg tablets	16 tablet packs	32 tablet packs*		Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief *larger quantities of up to 100 tablets may be sold at the pharmacist's professional discretion
	Paracetamol 120mg/5ml suspension	Up to 100ml	200ml	≥3 months ≥2 months for immunisation	Babies born before 37 weeks, babies weighing less than 4kg
	Paracetamol 250mg/5ml suspension	Up to 100ml	200ml	≥6 years	
	Ibuprofen 200mg, 400mg tablets Ibuprofen 100mg/5ml liquid	200mg 16 tablet packs	200mg ≥32 tablet packs All 400mg packs	≥3 months	Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief, asthma, unstable high blood pressure, taking anticoagulants, taking methotrexate, stomach ulcers/problem, not for use in Chicken Pox
	Co-codamol 8/500mg		All pack sizes	≥12 years	Severe Liver disease, breastfeeding, pregnancy
	Ibuprofen 5% gel Ibuprofen 10% gel	5% gel	10% gel	≥14 years	Pregnancy, breastfeeding, broken/ infected skin, asthma
	Diclofenac 2.32 and 3% gel		All pack sizes	≥14 years	Pregnancy, breastfeeding, broken/ infected skin, asthma
Hayfever/ allergies	Cetirizine 10mg tablets Cetirizine 1mg/ml solution	14 tablet packs 70ml solution	All other pack sizes	≥12 years	Patients with kidney problems, pregnancy, breastfeeding
	Loratadine 10mg tablets	10 tablet packs	All other pack sizes	≥12 years	Pregnancy, breastfeeding
	Chlorphenamine		All pack sizes	≥12 years	Pregnancy, breastfeeding
	Chlorphenamine 2mg/5ml solution		All pack sizes	≥1 year	Children with Asthma, children taking Monoamine oxidase inhibitors
	Acrivastine 8mg capsules	12 tablets	All other pack sizes	≥12 years <65 years	Pregnancy, breastfeeding
	Beclometasone 0.05% nasal spray	100 sprays	180 sprays	≥18 years	
	Sodium cromoglicate 2% eye drops	✓			
Athletes foot	Miconazole 2% cream/ powder Miconazole 0.16% powder	0.16% powder	2% cream/ powder		
	Terbinafine hydrochloride 1% cream/ gel/ powder/ spray	1% cream 1% spray	1% gel	Spray ≥16 years Others ≥12 years	Diabetic patients, pregnancy, breastfeeding
Cold sores	Aciclovir cream 5%		✓		Immunocompromised and terminally ill, only for face and lips

MOMEDS-026 – V1 - Common medicines available to purchase OTC Guidance	Status: Approved	Next Review Date: March 2020
©NHS Commissioning Board. Developed by North of England Commissioning Support Unit 2018	Approved date: 27/03/18	Page 1 of 3

Minor illness/ self-limiting condition	Medication available over the counter (OTC) See PAGB OTC Directory or product SPC for information about specific products	Sales classification		Age restrictions	Contraindications
		GSL (general sale)	P (pharmacy only)		
Conjunctivitis (uncomplicated/ bacterial)	Chloramphenicol 0.5% eye drops Chloramphenicol 1% eye ointment		✓	≥2 years	Pregnancy, breastfeeding, contact lenses should not be used when treating
Cystitis	Sodium citrate 4g sachet	✓		≥16 years	Men, diabetic patients, heart disease, hypertension, renal disease, pregnancy, breastfeeding
	Potassium citrate 1.5g liquid/ 3g sachet/ 1.5g effervescent tablet			≥16 years	History of kidney disease, pregnancy, breastfeeding
Diarrhoea	Oral rehydration solutions/ sachets	✓			Patients with liver or kidney disease, patients on low sodium/ potassium diets, patients with diabetes
	Loperamide 2mg capsules	Up to 6 capsules	All other pack sizes	≥12 years	Inflammatory bowel disease Post bowel surgery Post pelvic radiation Colorectal cancer
Ear wax	Olive oil drops Sodium bicarbonate drops Arachis oil/chlorobutanol hemihydrate drops (Cerumol®) Docusate sodium 0.5% drops (Waxsol®) Acetic Acid 2% (EarCalm®) (for minor ear infection only)	Olive oil Sodium bicarbonate drops	All other drops/ sprays	Ear Calm not for <12 years	Perforated ear drums, Cermol® (arachis oil) nut allergy
Head lice	Dimeticone 4% gel/ lotion/ spray	100ml pack	All other pack sizes	≥6 months	
	Malathion 0.5% aqueous lotion	✓		≥6 months	
Haemorrhoids	Zinc oxide (e.g. Anusol®, Germaloids®)	✓		≥16 years	Pregnancy, breastfeeding, rectal bleeding or blood in stools
Indigestion, dyspepsia, heartburn, upset stomach	Sodium alginate Calcium carbonate Sodium bicarbonate	✓		≥12 years	Avoid in heart or renal failure
	Gaviscon infant		✓	≥12 months ≤ 2 years	Babies born before 37 weeks Avoid if excessive water loss likely (diarrhoea, vomiting etc)
	Bismuth subsalicylate (Pepto-Bismol®)		✓	≥16 years	Sensitivity to aspirin, do not take alongside aspirin
	Esomeprazole 20mg tablets (Nexium Control®)	✓		≥18 years ≤55 years	Pregnancy, breastfeeding, jaundice or liver disease
	Pantoprazole 20mg tablets (Pantoloc Control®)		✓	≥18 years ≤55 years	Pregnancy, breastfeeding, jaundice or liver disease
	Ranitidine 75mg tablets	Up to 12 tablets		≥16 years	Peptic ulceration, elderly taking NSAIDs
Infant colic	Simeticone 40mg/ml	✓			
	Dimeticone 42mg/5ml	✓			Fructose, glucose-galactose or sucrose intolerant patients (contains sucrose)
	Lactase enzyme (Colief®)	✓			
Nappy rash	Titanium dioxide, titanium peroxide, titanium salicylate (Metanium®)	✓			
	Zinc oxide, Benzyl alcohol, benzyl benzoate, lanolin (Sudocrem®)	✓			
Nasal congestion	Sodium chloride 0.9% nasal drops, spray	✓			

Minor illness/ self-limiting condition	Medication available over the counter (OTC) See PAGB OTC Directory or product SPC for information about specific products	Sales classification		Age restrictions	Contraindications
		GSL (general sale)	P (pharmacy only)		
Scabies	Permethrin 5% dermal cream		✓	≥2 months	
	Crotamiton 10% cream	✓		≤3 years	Breastfeeding, pregnancy
Teething, sore mouth conditions (e.g. ulcers)	Lidocaine Hydrochloride (Bonjela®), Chlorocresol, Cetylpyridinium (Anbesol®)			≥16 years	Active peptic ulceration, pregnancy, breastfeeding, hypersensitivity to the active substances, anaesthetics of the amide-type, lidocaine is considered to be unsafe in patients with porphyria
	Choline salicylate, cetalkonium chloride (Bonjela®)				
	Bonjela teething gel	✓		≥2 months	Heart disease, liver disease
Threadworms	Mebendazole 100mg tablets (Ovex®)		✓	≥2 years	Pregnancy, breastfeeding
Thrush/ oral thrush	Clotrimazole 1% cream		✓	≥16 years ≤60 years	
	Clotrimazole 2% cream Clotrimazole 10% intravaginal cream (Canesten Cream Combi®)	✓		≥16 years ≤60 years	Pregnancy
	Clotrimazole 500mg pessary and clotrimazole 2% cream (Canesten Combi®)	✓		≥16 years ≤60 years	
	Fluconazole 150mg capsule and clotrimazole 2% cream (Canesten Duo®)		✓	≥16 years ≤60 years	Lactose intolerance, pregnancy
	Fluconazole 150mg capsule		✓	≥16 years ≤60 years	Lactose intolerance, pregnancy
	Miconazole 2% oral gel (15g) (Daktarin® oral gel)		✓	≥4 months	Pregnancy, breastfeeding, patients taking warfarin
Sore throat	Benzydamine spray/ oral rinse (Difflam®)		✓	≥12 years	Pregnancy, breastfeeding
Minor skin conditions (dermatitis, mild to moderate dry skin)	Clobetasone 0.05% cream (Eumovate® eczema and dermatitis cream)		✓	≥12 years	Broken or inflamed skin, pregnancy, breastfeeding
	Hydrocortisone 1% cream		✓	≥10 years	Not be used on the eyes or face, the ano-genital area or on broken or infected skin including impetigo, cold sores, acne athlete's foot, or infected bites and stings
	Crotamiton 10% cream (Eurax®) Crotamiton 10% and hydrocortisone 0.25% cream (Eurax HC®)	Eurax	Eurax HC	≥3 years Eurax HC® ≥10 years	Broken or inflamed skin, pregnancy, breastfeeding
	Emollient creams, lotions, gels	✓			
	Urea 5%, lauromacrogols 3% (E45 Itch Relief®)	✓			Broken or inflamed skin
	Calamine lotion Colloidal oatmeal ointment (Aveeno®)				
Warts and verrucae	Salicylic acid and lactic acid gel	Bazuka treatment gel	Other preparations		Diabetic Patients, face, neck, ano-genital area Moles, birthmarks, hairy warts or skin lesions, broken skin
	Salicylic acid and lactic acid paints		✓		Diabetic patients, face, neck, ano-genital area Moles, birthmarks, hairy warts or skin lesions, broken skin Impaired peripheral blood circulation
	Scholl freeze, Bazuka sub zero	✓		≥4 years	Diabetic Patients, face, neck, ano-genital area Moles, birthmarks, hairy warts or skin lesions, broken skin