

## **Grazed knee? Sore throat? Cough? Verruca?**

**Many illnesses or symptoms can be treated best at home with rest and over-the-counter medicines available from your local pharmacy.**

*Dear Patient,*

Every year, patients make around 50 million visits to their GP with minor health problems such as coughs and colds, mild eczema, and athlete's foot. But by visiting your pharmacy instead, you could save yourself time and trouble.

All pharmacists can recognise many common health complaints. They can give advice or, where appropriate, medicines that will help to clear up the problem. If your problem is more serious and needs the attention of a GP, your pharmacist will recognise this and advise you to see your GP.

Instead of booking and waiting for a GP appointment, you can visit your local pharmacist any time: just walk in.

Most pharmacies also have consulting rooms so you talk to a pharmacist in private. What's more, many pharmacies are open in the evenings and on the weekends.

This helps to free up your GP's time, making it easier to get a convenient appointment with your GP the next time you need one.

### **Your pharmacist may be able to help with:**

- skin conditions, such as mild acne and mild eczema
- coughs and colds, including nasal congestion and sore throat
- minor cuts and bruises
- constipation and haemorrhoids (piles)
- hay fever and allergies
- aches and pains, such as headaches, earache and backache
- indigestion, diarrhoea and threadworms
- period pain and thrush
- warts and verrucas, mouth ulcers and cold sores
- athlete's foot
- nappy rash and teething
- travel medicines, sun creams and treatments for insect bites
- head lice treatments
- creams for bruising, tattoos and varicose vein
- earwax removers

*Some pharmacists can also provide truss fittings, stoma products and incontinence supplies.*

### **How can community pharmacists help me look after my health?**

Pharmacists are highly skilled health care professionals trained in medicines, including those that can be purchased direct, and can help you to:

- decide if you need to seek the advice of a GP for your condition
- stop smoking
- lose weight
- understand more about medicines and how to take them

*You can request a Medicines Use Review (MUR). The MUR is an appointment with a pharmacist to focus on how you are getting on with your medicines. It usually takes place in a private consultation area in your local pharmacy, where you regularly get your prescriptions. It is an NHS service – you don't need to pay for it, and it is offered in most pharmacies.*

### **You can prepare for many illnesses and minor ailments by keeping a small supply of over-the-counter remedies at home.**

Essential items include:

- Pain and fever relief medicine like paracetamol or aspirin for adults (children under 16 or people with asthma should not take aspirin)
- Paracetamol or ibuprofen syrups for children (for example Calpol or Nurofen for Children)
- Cough and cold relief preparations
- Antihistamine tablets/liquids
- Mild laxatives
- Anti-diarrhoea medicines
- Oral rehydration mixture for diarrhoea and sickness
- Antacid and indigestion remedies
- Travel sickness tablets
- Tweezers and sharp scissors
- A thermometer
- A selection of plasters
- Non-absorbent cotton wool
- Elastic bandages and dressings
- Creams for skin rash, bites and stings and cuts

*Remember to keep the medicine cabinet in a secure, locked place out of reach of small children, always read the instructions and use the suggested dose. Watch for expiry dates and don't keep medicines past their sell-by date.*