

# Over the Counter Medications Policy

## Garnet Fold Practice/Southbrook Surgery

The practice is aiming to reduce the prescribing of medicines available over the counter. This is for one-off prescriptions and repeat prescriptions.

### Why?

- It has been longstanding national guidance
- We are currently prescribing more than the average similar sized practice
- These medications actually cost the NHS more compared to if they were bought over the counter, as this cost includes dispensing fees and drug prices for the NHS
- Take Ibuprofen for example if purchased from Aldi:
  - Aldi: 24 tablets cost £0.30
  - NHS: 24 tablets cost £0.88 and there is a £1.00 dispensing fee. Total £1.88
  - A cost 6 times more if prescribed rather than purchased over the counter

### Which Medications?

- Painkillers – Paracetamol, Ibuprofen (tablets and gel), Co-codamol, Diffiam spray/mouthwash
- Hay fever/Allergies - Antihistamines (Cetirizine, Loratadine, Fexofenadine, Chlorphenamine), Steroid nasal sprays (Beconase, Clarinaze)
- Moisturisers – Aveeno, Dermal 500, Doublebase, Hydromol, Cetraben, Diprobase
- Vitamins – Multivitamins, Vitamin D (even high dose), Thiamine, Magnesium
- Dandruff – Ketoconazole shampoo
- Antacids – Gaviscon
- Eyedrops – Chloramphenicol, Allergy and Dry Eye Drops
- And many others such as scabies, head lice, warts and verruca treatments.

The practice is currently spending £60,000 annually on the prescription of such medications and to put it into perspective that is equivalent to: 90 GP appointments a week for a year!

We plan to remove some of these medications from repeat prescriptions and save the NHS money.

We hope you understand why we are making these changes and work together with us to improve this aspect of our care.

There will be exceptions depending on chronic conditions requiring regular use.