

Self Help

This guide is to help you see which conditions you can safely try treating yourself or with the advise of your pharmacist.

For information on all conditions listed below (and many more) see www.NHS.uk - HEALTH A-Z

Prices:

The guide below gives an indication of cost. At the time of writing (July 2019) the cost of a single medication on prescription in England was £9 (see www.NHS.UK for up to date charges)

£	££	£££
50p - £2	£2 - £6	£6-£10

Gastrointestinal System

Dyspepsia or acid reflux (Indigestion or heart burn)

- Discomfort in the upper abdomen or chest often after eating. Associated with feeling sick, full or bloated. Bringing up food or bitter tasting liquids. See GP if : keep getting indigestion
- are in bad pain
- are 55 or older
- have lost a lot of weight without meaning to
- have difficulty swallowing (dysphagia)
- keep vomiting
- have [iron deficiency anaemia](#)
- feel like you have a lump in your stomach
- have bloody vomit or poo

These symptoms can be a sign of something more serious.

Name of Medicine	Cost
Gaviscon® Advance Liquid	£££
Gaviscon ®Advance Tablets	££
Ranitidine 75mg Tablets	£

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

A common condition affecting the digestive system causing, stomach cramps, bloating, diarrhea and/or constipation. Often a lifelong problem. For more information see <https://www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts/IBSfoodfacts.pdf>

See GP if there is bleeding when passing stool, a family history of Inflammatory bowel disease or coeliacs, or a family history of ovarian cancer, or if the condition is persistent and intrusive.



TheMedicineBox
Loughborough University Pharmacy



Dr Vaghela & Dr Gill
University Medical Centre

If you are over 60 and develop new symptoms like this see your GP. Ask for an urgent appointment if you have:

- lost a lot of weight for no reason
- bleeding from your bottom or bloody diarrhoea
- a hard lump or swelling in your tummy
- shortness of breath, noticeable heartbeats (palpitations) and pale skin

These could be signs of something more serious.

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
Mebeverine 135mg Tablets	Colofac Tablets	££
Hyoscine Butylbromide 10mg Tablets	Buscopan Tablets	££
Peppermint Oil Capsules EC MR	Colpermin Capsules	££

Constipation

Difficulty passing stool (poo), going to pass stool less than 3 times per week, passing larger stool than normal or dry hard lumpy stool. Before trying medication try increasing the amount of fibre in your diet. See www.nhs.uk and search constipation and “How to get more fibre into your diet.”

- See your GP if: symptoms are not improving with treatment
- are regularly constipated and it lasts a long time
- are bloated and it lasts a long time
- have [blood in your poo](#)
- have unexpectedly lost weight (or a child has not grown or gained weight)
- feel very tired all the time

Speak to the GP before you stop taking any prescribed medication.

Name of Medicine	Cost
Docusate 100mg caps	££
Senna 7.5mg tablets	££
Glycerin Suppositories	£
Lactulose Syrup	££
Macrogols	££

Acute Diarrhoea

A pharmacist can help if:

- you or your child (over 5 years) have signs of dehydration – such as dark, smelly pee or peeing less than usual
- you need to stop diarrhoea for a few hours

They may recommend:

- oral rehydration sachets you mix with water to make a drink
- medicine to stop diarrhoea for a few hours (like loperamide) – not suitable for children under 12

Get advice from 111 now if:

- you're worried about a baby under 12 months
- your child stops breast or bottle feeding while they're ill
- a child under 5 years has signs of dehydration – such as fewer wet nappies
- you or your child (over 5 years) still have signs of dehydration after using oral rehydration sachets
- you or your child keep being sick and cannot keep fluid down
- you or your child have bloody diarrhoea or bleeding from the bottom
- you or your child have diarrhoea for more than 7 days or vomiting for more than 2 days

111 will tell you what to do. They can arrange a phone call from a nurse or doctor if you need it.

Call 999 or go to A&E if you or your child:

- vomit blood or have vomit that looks like ground coffee
- have bright green or yellow vomit
- might have swallowed something poisonous
- have a stiff neck and pain when looking at bright lights
- have a sudden, severe headache or stomach ache

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
Oral Rehydration Salt Sachets	Dioralyte	££
Loperamide Capsules	Imodium	££

Haemorrhoids/PILES

Piles (haemorrhoids) are lumps inside and around your bottom (anus). They often get better on their own after a few days.

See a GP if:

- there's no improvement after 7 days of treatment at home
- you keep getting piles

Your GP may prescribe stronger medicines for haemorrhoids or constipation.



TheMedicineBox
Loughborough University Pharmacy



Dr Vaghela & Dr Gill
University Medical Centre

Urgent advice: Ask for an urgent GP appointment or call 111 if:

- you have piles and your temperature is very high or you feel hot and shivery and generally unwell
- you have pus leaking from your piles

Name of Medicine	Cost
Anusol Cream / Ointment	££
Anusol Suppositories	££
Anusol Plus HC Ointment	£££
Anusol Plus HC Suppoitories	£££

Allergies

An allergy is a reaction the body has to a particular food or substance. Hay fever is an allergy to grass pollen and is also know as seasonal rhinitis.

Allergic reactions usually happen quickly within a few minutes of exposure to an allergen.

They can cause:

- sneezing
- a runny or blocked nose
- red, itchy, watery eyes
- wheezing and coughing
- a red, itchy rash
- worsening of [asthma](#) or [eczema](#) symptoms

Anaphylaxis is a severe form of allergy, and is a medical emergency. Call 999 and use an epipen if available;

Signs of anaphylaxis include any of the symptoms above, as well as:

- swelling of the throat and mouth
- difficulty breathing
- [lightheadedness](#)
- confusion
- [blue skin or lips](#)
- collapsing and losing consciousness

Oral Antihistamines

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
Cetirizine 10mg Tabs	Zirtek, Piriteze, Benadryl one a day	£ - £££
Loratidine 10mg Tablets	Clarityn	£ - £££



TheMedicineBox
Loughborough University Pharmacy



Dr Vaghela & Dr Gill
University Medical Centre

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
Chlorphenamine 4mg Tablets	Piriton	£-££

Allergic Rhinitis

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
Beclometasone Nasal Spray	Beconase	££- £££
Fluticasone Nasal Spray	Pirinase	££
Mometasone Nasal Spray	Clarinate	£££

Allergic Conjunctivitis Eye Preparation

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
Sodium Cromoglycate 2% Eye Drops	Opticrom, Optrex Allergy, Murine Allergy, Allercrom	££

Coughs Colds and Congestion

Cough

Coughs and colds are often “self limiting” illnesses (they go away on their own without treatment in within 3 weeks.)

The medications below may make the illness less unpleasant but will not shorten the duration of the illness. Antibiotics are often ineffective against these illnesses.

See a GP if:

- you have had a cough for more than 3 weeks (persistent cough)
- your cough is very bad or quickly gets worse – for example, you have a hacking cough or cannot stop coughing
- you feel very unwell
- you have chest pain
- you're losing weight for no reason
- the side of your neck feels swollen and painful (swollen glands)
- you find it hard to breathe
- you have a weakened immune system – for example, because of chemotherapy or diabetes

See a GP urgently if you're coughing up blood.



TheMedicineBox
LONDONBROUGH UNIVERSITY PHARMACY



Dr Vaghela & Dr Gill
University Medical Centre

Cough Preparations

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
Simple Linctus SF	-	£
Pholcodine Linctus 5mg/5ml SF		£
Dextromethorphan	Robitussin Dry, Benylin Dry	££-£££
Guaiphenesin	Robitussin Chesty, Benylin Chesty	££-£££

Nasal Congestion

This is common, and can usually be managed without seeing a GP, sinusitis is an infection of the nasal passages:

Symptoms include:

- pain, swelling and tenderness around your cheeks, eyes or forehead
- a blocked nose
- a reduced sense of smell
- green or yellow mucus from your nose
- a sinus headache
- a high temperature of 38C or above
- toothache
- bad breath
- Try the self help measures suggested on www.NHS.Uk and speak to the pharmacist.

See your Gp if:

- your symptoms are severe
- painkillers do not help or your symptoms get worse
- your symptoms do not improve after a week
- you keep getting sinusitis

Topical Nasal Decongestants

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
Sodium Chloride 0.9% Spray	Sterimar	££
Xylometazoline 0.1% Spray	Otrivine, Sudafed	££
Oxymetazoline 0.05% Spray	Sinex	££

Oral Nasal Decongestants

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
------------------	------------	------



TheMedicineBox
LONDONBROUGH UNIVERSITY PHARMACY



Dr Vaghela & Dr Gill
University Medical Centre

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
Phenylephrine HCl	Lemsip, Beechams, Many Others	££
Pseudoephedrine 60mg	Sudafed, Day Nurse, Lemsip...	££

Pain

For pain associated with inflammation, such as [back pain](#), [headaches](#), sprains, & sports injuries, paracetamol and anti-inflammatory painkillers (like Ibuprofen) work best. The aim of taking medication is to improve your quality of life. All painkillers have potential side effects, so you need to weigh up the advantages of taking them against the disadvantages. If you have asthma there is a risk of Aspirin and Ibuprofen making your Asthma worse. If this has happened before do not use these products (paracetamol is Ok). Codeine is a painkiller which works better in combination with paracetamol than on its own, it should only be used in the short term as it can lead to dependency. Beware of using codeine with headaches, if you do this persistently it can actually make the headache worse. If you are pregnant speak to the pharmacist before using painkillers. Paracetamol and Ibuprofen are also used to help treat minor illnesses and fever symptoms, they can help reduce your temperature (antipyretic) and make you feel better. If your pain is not controlled with these medications then have a chat with the pharmacist who can advise if you need see your GP, or book directly with a physiotherapist.

Analgesics / Antipyretics

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
Paracetamol 500mg Tablets	Panadol	£ - ££
Aspirin 300mg Tablets	Anadin, Aspro	£ - ££
Ibuprofen 200mg Tablets	Nurofen	£ - ££
Co-codamol 8/500mg Tablets	Solpadeine, Syndol,	£ - ££

Musculoskeletal Pain & Sports Injuries

Name of Medicine	Brand Name	Cost
Ibuprofen Gel 5% & 10%	Ibuprofen, Nurofen	£ - £££
Diclofenac Gel 1.16% - 2.32%	Voltarol	£ - £££
Chlorphenamine 4mg Tablets	Piriton	£ - ££

References:



TheMedicineBox
LONDONBROUGH UNIVERSITY PHARMACY



Dr Vaghela & Dr Gill
University Medical Centre

WWW.NHS.UK

WWW.BDA.UK.COM

[Https://bnf.nice.org.uk](https://bnf.nice.org.uk)