

# NHS Pharmacy First – referrals for minor illnesses

**Service suitability**

The service is only for patients aged over 1 year.

CONDITIONS	What conditions are SUITABLE for referral to pharmacists?			Do NOT refer in these circumstances	
BITES / STINGS	• Bee sting • Wasp sting	• Stings with minor redness	• Stings with minor swelling	• Drowsy / fever • Fast heart rate	• Severe swellings or cramps
COLDS	• Cold sores • Coughs	• Flu-like symptoms	• Sore throat	• Lasted +3 weeks • Shortness of breath	• Chest pain • Unable to swallow
CONGESTION	• Blocked or runny nose	• Constant need to clear their throat	• Excess mucus • Hay fever	• Lasted +3 weeks • Shortness of breath	• 1 side obstruction • Facial swelling
EAR	• Earache	• Ear wax • Blocked ear	• Hearing problems	• Something may be in the ear canal • Discharge	• Severe pain. • Deafness • Vertigo
EYE	• Conjunctivitis • Dry/sore tired eyes • Eye, red or irritable	• Eye, sticky • Eyelid problems	• Watery / runny eyes	• Severe pain • Pain 1 side only	• Light sensitivity • Reduced vision
GASTRIC / BOWEL	• Constipation • Diarrhoea • Infant colic	• Heartburn • Indigestion	• Haemorrhoids • Rectal pain, • Vomiting or nausea	• Severe / on-going • Lasted +6 weeks	• Patient +55 years • Blood / Weight loss
GENERAL	• Hay fever	• Sleep difficulties	• Tiredness	• Severe / on-going	
GYNAE / THRUSH	• Cystitis • Vaginal discharge	• Vaginal itch or soreness		• Diabetic / Pregnant • Under 16 / over 60 • Unexplained bleeding	• Pharmacy treatment not worked • Had thrush 2x in last 6 months
PAIN	• Acute pain • Ankle or foot pain • Headache • Hip pain or swelling • Knee or leg pain	• Lower back pain • Lower limb pain • Migraine • Shoulder pain	• Sprains and strains • Thigh or buttock pain • Wrist, hand or finger pain	• Condition described as severe or urgent • Conditions have been on-going for +3 weeks	• Chest pain / pain radiating into the shoulder • Pharmacy treatment not worked • Sudden onset
SKIN	• Acne, spots and pimples • Athlete's foot • Blisters on foot • Dermatitis / dry skin • Hair loss	• Hay fever • Nappy rash • Oral thrush • Rash - allergy • Ringworm/ threadworm	• Scabies • Skin dressings • Skin rash • Warts/verrucae • Wound problems	• Condition described as severe or urgent • Conditions have been on-going for +3 weeks	• Pharmacy treatment not worked • Skin lesions / blisters with discharge • Diabetes related?
MOUTH / THROAT	• Cold sore blisters • Flu-like symptoms • Hoarseness	• Mouth ulcers • Sore mouth • Sore throat	• Oral thrush • Teething • Toothache	• Lasted +10 days • Swollen painful gums • Sores inside mouth	• Unable to swallow • Patient has poor immune system • Voice change
SWELLING	• Ankle or foot swelling • Lower limb swelling	• Thigh or buttock swelling • Toe pain or swelling	• Wrist, hand or finger swelling	• Condition described as severe or urgent • Condition ongoing for +3 weeks	• Discolouration to skin • Pharmacy treatment not worked • Recent travel abroad

**Important:**  
Please note this slide is intended as a guide and has been adapted from a similar table used to support CPCS minor illness referrals from GP practices which now forms part of Pharmacy First along with the 7 Clinical Pathways.

Following referral for a minor illness the pharmacist will assess the patient and either  
- support the patient through what was previously the minor illness pathway for CPCS,  
- if necessary they will assess and check if the patient needs and can be supported through the 7 clinical pathways  
- or if e.g. symptoms have deteriorated or red flags are identified, promptly escalate them to higher acuity support.