

## Rationale

- Migraine is a common health condition, affecting around one in every five women and one in every 15 men. Mild infrequent migraines can be adequately treated with over the counter (OTC) pain killers and a number of combination medicines for migraine are available that contain both painkillers and anti-sickness medicines.
- Those with severe or recurrent migraines should continue to seek advice and treatment from their GP.

## Recommendations for clinicians

- Provide the patient with a 'non-prescription' sheet or a patient information leaflet to promote education about self-limiting conditions suitable for self-care when appropriate.
- Advise patients of safe and effective self-care measures:
  - Avoiding any known triggers.
  - Sleeping or lying in a darkened room during an attack.
  - Maintain a generally healthy lifestyle and keep a headache diary.
- Opioids are present in some OTC combination treatments for migraine but are not to be recommended for use because they may exacerbate nausea and will also increase the risk of medication overuse headache.
- Advise patients to seek medical advice if OTC treatments are ineffective, needed frequently or they are experiencing side effects.

### Example of products available to buy over the counter\*

Sumatriptan 50mg tablets – **Not licensed for under 18 years and above 65 years. Only to be given to those who have been already medically diagnosed with migraine. (~£8.00 for 2 tablets)**

Paracetamol (tablets) - **Not licensed for under 10 years (25p-£3 for 16 tablets/capsules)**

Paracetamol (suspension) – **Not licensed for under 2 months (£2.50-£4.50 for 100ml)**

Ibuprofen (tablets) – **Not licensed under the age of 12 years (35p-£4.00 for 16 tablets/capsules)**

Ibuprofen (suspension) – **Not licensed for under 3 months (£2.50-£4.00 for 100ml)**

Buccastem (3mg prochlorperazine malate) buccal tablets) – **Not licensed for under 18 years (~£6.90 for 8 tablets)**

For further information see Self-care forum <http://www.selfcareforum.org/>, NHS UK <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/>, Patient UK <https://patient.info/>

\*Prices correct at time of writing and are subject to change

