

Self Care Briefing for Clinicians: Travel Sickness

Summary

Mild motion sickness can be treated by various self-care measures (e.g. stare at a fixed object, fresh air, listen to music etc.) More severe motion sickness can be treated with over-the-counter medicines.

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:
 - Avoid eating heavy meals before travelling.
 - It may help to look straight ahead at a fixed point, such as the horizon.
 - Reduce motion, sit in the front of a car or in the middle of a boat.
 - On long journeys, try breaking the journey to have some fresh air, drink some cold water and, if possible, take a short walk.
 - Breathe fresh air, if possible, for example, open a car window. You should also try to breathe slowly.
 - Avoid strong smells, particularly petrol and diesel fumes. This may mean closing the window and turning on the air conditioning or avoiding the engine area in a boat.
 - Close your eyes (and keep them closed for the whole journey). This reduces 'positional' signals from your eyes to your brain and reduces the confusion.
 - Do not try to read, watch films, or use electronic devices.
 - Try listening to an audio book with your eyes closed.
 - Distract children by talking, listening to or singing songs.

Examples of over-the-counter products available to buy

Please advise patients that suggested prices are, a guide, correct at the time of writing and are subject to change.

- Cinnarizine tablets: Not licensed for children under 5 years old (£4.00 for 15 tablets).
- Hyoscine tablets: Not licensed for children under 3 years old (£2.80 for 12 tablets).

- Hyoscine hydrobromide 150 micrograms (Kwells® Kids): Not licensed for children under 4 years old (£2.50 for 12 tablets).

If a patient is pregnant or breastfeeding, they should not purchase travel sickness medications over-the counter without discussing with their doctor or midwife first.

Further information

- [Selfcare forum](#)
- [NHS.uk](#)
- [Patient UK](#)

Document History

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