

## Self Care Briefing for Clinicians: Sunburn

### Summary

Most people manage sunburn symptoms themselves or prevent symptoms from developing by using sun protection. These products can easily be bought over-the-counter.

### 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. Self care advice includes cooling the skin with a bath or shower, drinking plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration, taking painkillers to ease pain and using emollients or gels containing aloe vera to moisturise and soothe the skin.
- Advise patients to seek medical attention and consider treatment with a prescription in the following circumstances:
  - A baby or young child has sunburn as their skin is particularly sensitive.
  - There is blistering or swelling of the skin.
  - They have a high temperature of 38°C or above or they feel very hot and shivery.
  - They feel very tired, dizzy and sick.
  - They are experiencing a headache and muscle cramps.
  - Severe sunburn can lead to heat exhaustion and heatstroke which can be very serious.

### 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.

- Calamine Lotion: Licensed for all ages (£1.70-£2.20 for 200ml).
- Paracetamol (tablets): Not licensed for children under 10 years old (£0.90-£3.00 for 16 tablets).
- Paracetamol (suspension): Not licensed for children under 2 months old (£2.50-£6.00 for 100ml).
- Ibuprofen (tablets): Not licensed for children under 12 years old (£0.35-£4.00 for 16 tablets).
- Ibuprofen (suspension): Not licensed for children under 3 months old (£4.50 for 100ml).

## Further information

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

## Document History

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