

## Other treatments

Depending on the type of pain you have, other treatments you could try include supports (for example elasticated tubular bandages, supportive footwear or a walking stick) or muscle rubs.

Soluble painkillers are high in salt and can contain up to 1g salt per tablet. This can raise your blood pressure and put you at increased risk of health problems such as heart disease and stroke.

***Always read the instructions and information leaflets that accompany your medicines.***

***Do not take two products containing the same active ingredient.***

## When should I see a GP?

If after five days your pain is not getting any better, or is getting worse, see your GP.

## More information is available at:

Search 'Living with Pain' on the NHS Choices website: <http://www.nhs.uk/>

Search 'Chronic Pain – A Self Help Guide' on the Patient.co.uk website:

<http://www.patient.co.uk/>

A 'pain toolkit' is available from:

<http://www.paintoolkit.org/>

Information on self-management courses are available from:

<http://selfmanagementuk.org/>

## What is NHS Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG (BSW CCG)?

The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is responsible for the planning and purchasing of the vast majority of health services across the area. This includes hospital care, mental health and community services. It works closely with all GP practices across BSW CCG

## Contact us:

Website: <https://www.bswccg.nhs.uk>

## Patient advice and liaison team (PALs)

Patients registered at BaNES & Wiltshire practices-  
[Bswccg.feedback@nhs.net](mailto:Bswccg.feedback@nhs.net) or tel 0300 123 2103 or 0300 013 4762

Patients registered at Swindon practices-  
[Scwcsu.palscomplaints@nhs.net](mailto:Scwcsu.palscomplaints@nhs.net) or tel 0300 200 8844

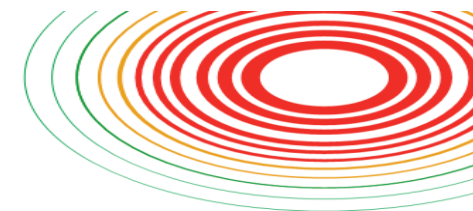
*(Last Updated July 2020)*



**Bath and North East Somerset,  
Swindon and Wiltshire**  
Clinical Commissioning Group

# Patient advice Pain relief for short-term minor ailments

This leaflet explains changes to the availability of pain relief products across Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG



## What are the changes?

In February 2017, NHS Bath and North East Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) decided to stop funding prescriptions of pain relief for short-term minor ailments to all but the most vulnerable patients. BSW CCG support this decision in line with NHS England [Guidance on conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care](#)

## Why was this decision made?

There is an urgent need to make financial savings in the NHS. Pain relief medicines are widely available in supermarkets and pharmacies and are cheaper for the public to buy over-the-counter than they are for the NHS to buy. Our decision allows us to save NHS money and to fund other treatments.

## What is pain?

Pain alerts us to disease or injury. The cause of pain can be obvious, for example a broken arm, but sometimes it is not easy to find the cause. No two people will experience pain in the same way, so the pain is best described by the person who is experiencing it.

## Different types of pain

- **Acute pain** is short term, lasting less than 12 weeks.
- **Chronic pain** is long-term and lasts longer than 12 weeks.
- **Recurrent pain** is a pain that comes and goes.

## Self-help tips for pain

Self-help tips and over-the-counter treatment could help you manage your condition, to minimise your pain and maximise your mobility.

- **Exercise**  
Gentle exercise like walking can ease pain by blocking signals to the brain. Exercise helps to stretch stiff, tense muscles; ligaments and joints; build up muscle strength and maintain joint movement.
- **Lose weight**  
If you are overweight it could help to manage your pain if you lose weight.
- **Hot and cold**  
A hot water bottle or a bath can help muscular pains and period pains. A cold compress can help headaches or sprains.
- **Massage**  
Massage can help to relieve muscular pains and massaging the temples can help to relieve headaches.
- **Relaxation**  
Regularly practicing relaxation techniques, for example reading or meditating can help to reduce pain and stress. Read the 'More information' section of this leaflet for details.

## What treatments can I buy to help my pain?

Speak to a pharmacist to get advice on the best treatment for you and always read the patient information leaflet.

Examples of products you can buy over-the-counter include:

### Paracetamol

Paracetamol is excellent for everyday aches and pains. Side effects are not common, but taking too much paracetamol can have serious effects. An overdose could cause permanent damage to your liver. Always refer to the patient information leaflet for correct dosage and never exceed the maximum dose.

If your pain is severe, go back and speak to the pharmacist. Many cold and flu remedies contain paracetamol so do not take both at the same time.

### Ibuprofen

Ibuprofen works well if your pain is due to inflammation, for example arthritis, muscle pain or an injury. It should be used with caution in older people due to the risk of serious side-effects and fatality. Ibuprofen should always be taken with food. It can trigger asthma attacks. Ibuprofen should not be used in high doses or for long periods of time. It should be used especially carefully if you currently or have ever had a stomach ulcer, asthma, heart, liver or kidney problems.