

Changes to prescribing

Advice for patients

The following products are not typically available on prescription:

- **Baby milks**
(Still available for diagnosed conditions such as Cows' Milk Protein Allergy)
- **Infant colic products**
- **Vitamin supplements**
(Still available for diagnosed deficiencies and following weight loss surgery)
- **Emollients (moisturisers) for minor dry skin conditions**
(still available for diagnosed skin conditions such as psoriasis and eczema)
- **Cosmetic products, including eflornithine for facial hair**
- **Antifungal nail paints**
- **Sunscreen products**
(Still available for patients diagnosed with abnormal reactions to sunlight)
- **Branded medicines**

Why aren't these products available on prescription?

Calderdale Clinical Commissioning Group does not recommend that GPs provide these products on prescription because they are self-care treatments, widely available from pharmacies, shops and supermarkets.

In the case of baby milks and formula, most brands provide a wide range, including thickened and lactose-free varieties, at a similar price to regular formula.

Your local NHS spends more than £300,000 every year prescribing these lower-value medicines and products. By making this change the NHS can spend this money on treatments that have a greater impact on people's health.

I use one of these products for a long-term condition. What does this mean for me?

Some people will continue to receive these products on prescription because they have a long-term health condition or have been prescribed products on the recommendation of a specialist.

See www.calderdaleccg.nhs.uk for details, or your GP or pharmacist will be able to provide further information.

I am worried about the cost of these products

Most of these self-care treatments and products are available to buy in pharmacies and shops at a lower price than it costs the NHS to provide on prescription. In many cases, there is little clinical evidence as to their effectiveness.

Families with a low income can get vouchers for baby milks and also access vitamins for young children and pregnant women free of charge. For more information visit www.healthystart.nhs.uk

Where can I get advice on the best product to buy?

Your local Community Pharmacist is a fully qualified health professional who will be able to advise you on the best product to meet your specific needs.

Self-care treatments and medicines are available from a range of pharmacies, shops and supermarkets.

You can also find general health advice on the NHS Choices website at: www.nhs.uk



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Expensive brands of medicine will not normally be prescribed if a suitable cheaper or 'generic' product is available.

What is the difference between branded and generic medicines?

All medicines have a generic name. They may also have one or more brand names chosen by the manufacturer.

Generic and branded medicines have the same active ingredients and the same medical effect.

In the UK there are strict quality controls that must be met before a medicine can be prescribed, so generic and branded medicine will always be of the same quality.

Why is the generic medicine a different colour or shape to my usual brand?

The colour, size or shape of a medicine may change depending on which company makes it. However, the medicine will have the same effect as your usual brand.

Check with your pharmacist or GP if you have any concerns about using a particular medicine.

Why are you making this change?

NHS Calderdale CCG have decided to stop routinely providing branded products on prescription because they have the same active ingredients and clinical effect as generic products, but can be up to 56 times more expensive.

Last year NHS Calderdale CCG spent £100,000 more than was necessary in prescribing branded medicines where there was no clinical need.

Will some medicines still be prescribed by brand?

Yes, where there is a clinical reason why a particular brand is needed it will still be available. Your doctor is aware of the situations when this is recommended, for example some medicines for epilepsy need to be prescribed by brand.

The CCG will also prescribe by brand where this is cost effective or recommended by local and national guidelines.



More information about the medicines and products available on prescription in Calderdale can be found at www.calderdaleccg.nhs.uk/prescribing

If you would like to speak to someone about this change, contact staff at your GP practice, your pharmacist or go to www.calderdaleccg.nhs.uk/contact-us