

Self-care: Dry Eyes & Sore Tired Eyes Factsheet for Medicines Optimisation Section 2023-24

Aim:

To support patients to practice self-care and understand how to manage minor and self-limiting conditions without visiting a GP practice:

- To review patients prescribed lubricating eye drops for the management of mild to moderate dry eye syndrome or sore tired eyes and recommend the purchasing of lubricating eye drops over the counter (OTC) in line with NHS England and Improvement guidance.

The self-care section asks practices to:

- Decrease the % of patients (of practice list size) prescribed self-care products to below or equal to 7.62%

Key Messages: Self-care

- The prescribing of items available OTC for minor and self-limiting conditions is not routinely supported in South East London (SEL) in line with [NHS England and Improvement guidance](#) and the [South East London Integrated Medicines Optimisation Committee Position Statement](#) for items available OTC for self-care
- The national and local guidance for self-care applies to all patients, unless they fall under the exceptions listed in the national and local guidance. Further information regarding exceptions to self-care can be found in the [SEL self-care frequently asked questions](#).
- Patients should be encouraged to speak to a community pharmacist about self-care advice and the purchasing of OTC items. The [General Practice Community Pharmacist Consultation Service](#) (GP CPCS) can also support GP practices with this.
- OTC items are available for patients to buy in a community pharmacy as well as other outlets e.g. supermarkets and health and beauty retailers.

Key Messages: Dry eyes and sore tired eyes products

- Patients should be encouraged to manage mild to moderate dry eyes and sore tired eyes by implementing [self-care measures](#) such as good eyelid hygiene. Most cases of sore tired eyes resolve themselves
- Mild to moderate cases of dry eye disease can often be successfully treated with the use of OTC lubricating eye drops alongside [self-care measures](#) without the need for referral to a GP or an ophthalmologist. Further information is also available on the [NHS website](#).
- Patients can be signposted to their local community pharmacist or optometrist who can recommend an appropriate lubricating eye drop based on the cause of the dry eyes for the patient to purchase OTC
- Lubricating eye drops can be prescribed for the management of severe dry eyes or other ophthalmologic conditions on the advice of a specialist in line with the [South East London Joint Medicines Formulary](#)

Recommendations to meet the dry eyes and sore tired eyes indicator threshold

Dry eyes and sore tired eyes

Recommended Action	Supporting Resources
<p>Identify patient's prescribed lubricating eye drops for the management of mild to moderate dry eyes and/or sore tired eyes using the EMIS dry eyes & sore tired eyes search (M0144) and review if any appropriate patients can be advised to purchase lubricating eye drops OTC.</p> <p>Additional caveats to support the identification of appropriate patients to recommend the purchasing of OTC lubricating eye drops includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patients initiated on lubricating eye drops as per recommendations from an optometrist (NOT ophthalmologist) Patients not under the care of an ophthalmologist 	<p>NICE CKS: Management of dry eye disease PrescQIPP Eye Preparation bulletin</p>

References

- Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs, NHS England, and Improvement. March 2018 <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/conditions-for-which-over-the-counter-items-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-guidance-for-ccgs/>
- South East London Integrated Medicines Optimisation Committee Position Statement for items available OTC for self-care. February 2019 <https://selondonccg.nhs.uk/download/11683/>
- Community Pharmacy Consultation Service web page, SEL CCG. <https://selondonccg.nhs.uk/healthcare-professionals/primary-care/lambeth/community-pharmacy-consultation-service-cpcs/>
- Self-care: Frequently asked questions about changes to prescribing of over the counter (OTC) medicines and products in South East London. April 2019 <https://selondonccg.nhs.uk/download/12365/>
- Management of dry eye syndrome. NICE Clinical Knowledge Summaries. January 2023 <https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/dry-eye-disease/>
- Eye preparations Bulletin - 202 2.0. PrescQIPP. March 2018 <https://www.prescqipp.info/umbraco/surface/authorisedmediasurface/index?url=%2fmedia%2f1866%2fb202-eye-preparations-20.pdf>