

## Good Practice Guidance for Prescribing Quantities

The following list provides suggested limits when prescribing 'as directed' or 'when required' items, based on the most common or maximum doses. Clinicians should review and adjust based on individual patient need and previous prescribing history. It has been calculated to show worked examples for items dispensed on a 56 week SRx with the quantities and dispensing frequency required.

### Good practice statements:

"Full, clear administration directions help patients understand how to use their medications properly and aid compliance. The use of 'prn' and 'mdu' is no longer considered good practice and should not be used. Exceptions to this, perhaps where dosage is adjusted according to need, e.g. warfarin, should be explicitly stated in the practice policy."

'Saving time, helping patients - a good practice guide to quality repeat prescribing'

National Prescribing Centre, January 2004

"Dose and dose frequency should be stated; in the case of preparations to be taken 'as required' a minimum dose interval should be specified."

[Prescription Writing](#). British National Formulary

| Medicine / Medicine Type                     | Strength / Dose / Detail (if applicable) | Approx quantity for 12 months | Suggested Limit in 12 months                                 | Total quantity on SRx | 56 wk frequency | Qty for CP to dispense |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Indigestion Remedies e.g. Gaviscon®, Peptac® | Gaviscon® 80-120 ml per day              | 81 x 500ml                    | Practically, this is likely to be equivalent to 3500ml/annum | 7 bottles             | 8 weekly        | 1x 500ml               |
|  | Peptac® 80ml per day                     | 54 x 500ml                    |  | 7 bottles             | 8 weekly        | 1 x 500ml              |
| Laxatives e.g. lactulose, senna              |  |                               | Practically, this is likely to be equivalent to 3500ml/annum | 7 bottles             | 8 weekly        | 1x 500ml               |

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|   |   |   |                        |   |  |  |
|---|---|---|------------------------|---|--|--|
| Anti-diarrhoeals e.g. loperamide  | Absolute max of 8 tablets per day   | 3136 (56 weeks at 8 per day)  |                        | 3136  | 8 weeks  | 448  |
| Glyceryl Trinitrate<br><a href="https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/download?ac=1065169&amp;firstPass=false">https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/download?ac=1065169&amp;firstPass=false</a><br><br>("patients using sublingual GTN more frequently than twice per week should be considered for regular prophylactic anti-anginal therapy) | 180 dose pump<br><br>200 dose pump  | 4 pumps<br><br>4 pumps  | 6 pumps<br><br>6 pumps | 4 pumps<br><br>4 pumps  | 14 weeks<br><br>14 weeks   | 1<br><br>1                                       |
| Reliever (blue) Inhalers e.g. salbutamol<br><br><a href="http://www.dontwasteabreath.com/view/reliever-inhaler">http://www.dontwasteabreath.com/view/reliever-inhaler</a><br><br>(lists limits to 14 as rough rule of thumb – although above site suggests 7 per annum for 200 dose at 4 – 8 puffs per day)                                       | 200 doses – 4-8 puffs per day<br>200 doses – 2 puffs per day<br>200 doses – less than 6 puffs per week<br><br>100 doses – 4-8 puffs per day<br>100 doses – 2 puffs per day<br>100 doses – less than 6 puffs per week<br><br>60 doses – 4-8 puffs per day<br>60 doses – 2 puffs per day<br>60 doses – less than 6 puffs per week | 7 inhalers<br>4 inhalers<br>2 inhalers<br><br>15 inhalers<br>7 inhalers<br>3 inhalers<br><br>24 inhalers<br>12 inhalers<br>5 inhalers |                        | 7 inhalers<br>4 inhalers<br>2 inhalers<br><br>14 inhalers<br>7 inhalers<br>4 inhalers<br><br>28 inhalers<br>14 inhalers<br>7 inhalers | 8 weeks<br>14 weeks<br>28 weeks<br><br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br>14 weeks<br><br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks | 1<br>1<br>1<br><br>2<br>1<br><br>4<br>2<br>1     |
| Preventer (brown) Inhalers<br><br><a href="http://www.dontwasteabreath.com/view/preventer%E2%80%94inhaler">http://www.dontwasteabreath.com/view/preventer%E2%80%94inhaler</a>   | 200 doses – 2 puffs twice daily<br>200 doses – 1 puff twice daily<br><br>120 doses – 2 puffs twice daily<br>120 doses – 1 puff twice daily<br><br>100 doses – 2 puffs twice daily<br>100 doses – 1 puff twice daily<br><br>60 doses – 2 puffs twice daily<br>60 doses – 1 puff twice daily                                      | 7 inhalers<br>4 inhalers<br><br>12 inhalers<br>6 inhalers<br><br>15 inhalers<br>7 inhalers<br><br>24 inhalers<br>12 inhalers          |                        | 7 inhalers<br>4 inhalers<br><br>14 inhalers<br>7 inhalers<br><br>14 inhalers<br>7 inhalers<br><br>28 inhalers<br>14 inhalers          | 8 weeks<br>14 weeks<br><br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br><br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br><br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks          | 1<br>1<br><br>2<br>1<br><br>2<br>1<br><br>4<br>2 |
| Paracetamol containing painkillers e.g. paracetamol, co-codamol   | Absolute max of 8 tablets per day   | 3136 (56 weeks at 8 per day)  |                        | 3136  | 8 weeks  | 448  |
| NSAID painkillers e.g. ibuprofen  | Ibuprofen 400mg – 2.4g daily  | 2352 (56 weeks at 6 per day)  |                        | 2352  | 8 weeks  | 336  |
| Vitamin B12 injection (hydroxocobalamin, cyanocobalamin)  | B12 deficiency – 1 every 2-3 months   | 6 ampoules  |                        | 7   | 8 weeks  | 1  |

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|   |   |   |  |                        |                                  |  |                            |
|---|---|---|--|------------------------|----------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Emollient Creams / Ointments<br><a href="https://www.gwh.nhs.uk/media/151202/emollients_prescribing_guideline_april-2017-final-3-.pdf">https://www.gwh.nhs.uk/media/151202/emollients_prescribing_guideline_april-2017-final-3-.pdf</a>   | Adult dose per week:<br>Face<br>Both hands<br>Scalp<br>Both arms or both legs<br>Trunk<br>Groin & genitalia                           | 15–30g<br>25–50g<br>50–100g<br>100–200g<br>400g<br>15–25g | 12 x 150g<br>6 x 500g<br>12 x 500g<br>24 x 500g<br>12 x 2kg<br>10 x 150g         |                        | 14<br>7<br>14<br>28<br>14<br>14  | 8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks | 2<br>1<br>2<br>4<br>2<br>2 |
| Emollient lotions<br><a href="https://www.gwh.nhs.uk/media/151202/emollients_prescribing_guideline_april-2017-final-3-.pdf">https://www.gwh.nhs.uk/media/151202/emollients_prescribing_guideline_april-2017-final-3-.pdf</a>  | Adult dose per week:<br>Face<br>Both hands<br>Scalp<br>Both arms or both legs<br>Trunk<br>Groin & genitalia                           | 100ml<br>200ml<br>200ml<br>200ml<br>500ml<br>100ml        | 10 x 500ml<br>20 x 500ml<br>20 x 500ml<br>20 x 500ml<br>52 x 500ml<br>10 x 500ml |                        | 14<br>21<br>21<br>21<br>56<br>14 | 8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br>8 weeks | 2<br>3<br>3<br>3<br>8<br>2 |
| Steroid Creams / Ointments<br>Rule of measure is a Finger Tip Unit (FTU).<br>Quantity depends on area to be applied.<br><br>A hand and fingers (front & back)            1 FTU<br>Front of chest and abdomen                    7 FTUs<br>Back and buttocks                                7 FTUs<br>Face and neck                                      2.5 FTUs<br>An entire arm and hand                         4 FTUs<br>An entire leg and foot                           8 FTUs<br><br><a href="https://patient.info/health/steroids/fingertip-units-for-topical-steroids">https://patient.info/health/steroids/fingertip-units-for-topical-steroids</a> | Adult doses: 1 FTU = 0.5g<br>Calculation based on 4 FTU:<br>30g – 15 days supply<br>50g - 25 days supply<br><br>100g – 50 days supply |   | 24 x 30g<br>14 x 50g<br><br>4 x 100g   | 4 x 100g or equivalent | 28<br>14<br><br>4                | 8 weeks<br>8 weeks<br><br>14 weeks                             | 4<br>2<br><br>1            |
| Eye drops<br><a href="https://www.optometrystudents.com/write-prescription-quick-reference-guide/">https://www.optometrystudents.com/write-prescription-quick-reference-guide/</a>  | Approx 30 drops per ml<br>5ml bottle equivalent to 150 drops.<br>28 day expiry  |   |  | 12 bottles             | 14                               | 8 weeks  | 2                          |
| Appliances  |   |   |  |                        | Not relevant for Serial Rx       |  |                            |
| Dressings and bandages  |   |   |  |                        | Not relevant for Serial Rx       |  |                            |

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|                         |   |                     |                            |          |   |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------|----------------------------|----------|---|
| Elastic hosiery         |   |                     | Not relevant for Serial Rx |          |   |
| Incontinence appliances |   |                     | Not relevant for Serial Rx |          |   |
| Stoma appliances        |   |                     | Not relevant for Serial Rx |          |   |
| Blood glucose strips:   | Type 1 adults and children = 2-4/month  | 36 bottles          | 35                         | 8 weeks  | 5 |
|                         | Type 2 with insulin therapy = 1-2/month | 24 bottles          | 28                         | 8 weeks  | 4 |
|                         | Sulfonylurea/glinide                    | 2 bottles           | 2                          | 28 weeks | 2 |
|                         | Other therapy                           | Testing unnecessary | Not relevant for Serial Rx |          |   |