

# How to use medicines correctly

## How do I buy medicines in Australia?

In Australia there are 2 different ways to buy medicines.

### Prescription medicines

Some medicines can only be bought with a piece of paper from your doctor (**prescription**). This prescription tells the pharmacy what medicine you need, when you should use it and how much to use.

To get your medicine, take the prescription to any pharmacy. Bring any cards you have that allow you to get discounts on medications such as a Medicare card, Centrelink Health Care card. If you are an asylum seeker, you may need to go to a specific pharmacy.

If you need to take the same medicine for a long time, the doctor can give you a "**repeat**" of a prescription. This means that you can buy the medicine again using the same prescription without having to go back to your doctor every time you need more of the medicine.

Prescription medicines shouldn't be used by anyone except the person whose name is on the prescription.

Dr. A Practitioner  
99 Station Street  
Central NSW 2001  
Phone: (99) 9999 9999  
Prescriber no.: 123456

Patient's Medicare no.: 3900724651-1

Pharmaceutical benefits endorsement number:  Safety net entitlement card holder (see relevant box)  Concessional or dependent RPS beneficiary or Safety net concession card holder

Patient's name: Mast John Citizen  
Address: 1 Station Street  
Central NSW 2001

Date: 03/04/07  
PBS  Brand substitution not permitted

Medicare Australia / DVA

**NEMDYN EAR OINTMENT 10g**  
**APPLY TOPICALLY TO SORES IN NOSTRIL TDS**

Qty: 1 0 repeat  
1 item

Dr. A Practitioner  
MBBS

*A Practitioner*

Please turn over for privacy note

I certify that I have received this medication and the information relating to any entitlement to free or concessional pharmaceutical benefits & not false or misleading.

Date of supply: \_\_\_\_\_ Patient's or agent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Agent's address: \_\_\_\_\_ 4824 110/001

An example of a prescription in Australia

It is important to keep taking prescription medicines until your doctor or pharmacist tells you it's okay to stop – even if you are feeling better.

It is important to tell every doctor or nurse that you see, what medicines you are taking and if there is a medicine that makes you sick. If you do not tell another doctor what your medicines are, the new doctor might give you new medicine, which will not work properly with the medicine you are already taking.

If you take vitamins, supplements, herbal or traditional medicines, tell you your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. Sometimes these medicines can interfere with medicine given by a doctor, or can cause other side effects.

## How do I take medicines correctly?

All medicines have a label.

The label gives you instructions for using the medicine safely including:

- How much to use
- When to use
- How many times a day you should use it
- How many days you should use it

## Over-the-counter medicines

For many medicines, you do not need a prescription and you can buy these medicines at other places other than pharmacies such as the supermarket. In English, these medicines are called “over-the-counter medicines”.

Examples of over-the-counter medicines:

- Cough, cold and flu medicines
- Pain medicines like aspirin, acetaminophen, and ibuprofen
- Medicines for sore throat, headache, earache, and body aches
- Eye drops
- Medicines for diarrhoea and constipation

**Do Not Use if pouch is broken or torn.**

Failure to follow these warnings could result in serious consequences.

Drug Facts	Purpose
<b>Active ingredients (in each LiquiCap)</b>	
Acetaminophen 325 mg	Pain reliever/fever reducer
Dextromethorphan HBr 15 mg	Cough suppressant
Doxylamine succinate 6.25 mg	AmbiSedative

**Uses:** temporarily relieves common cold/flu symptoms:  
 • cough due to minor throat & bronchial irritation • sore throat • headache  
 • minor aches & pains • fever • runny nose & sneezing

**Warnings:**  
**Liver warning:** This product contains acetaminophen. Severe liver damage may occur if you take  
 • more than 4 doses in 24 hrs, which is the maximum daily amount for this product  
 • with other drugs containing acetaminophen • 3 or more alcoholic drinks every day while using this product  
**Sore throat warning:** If sore throat is severe, persists for more than 2 days, is accompanied or followed by fever, headache, rash, hoarseness, or swelling, consult a doctor promptly.  
**Do not use** • with any other drug containing acetaminophen (prescription or nonprescription). If you are not sure whether a drug contains acetaminophen, ask a doctor or pharmacist.  
 • if you are now taking a prescription monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI) (certain drugs for depression, psychiatric or emotional conditions, or Parkinson's disease), or for 2 weeks after stopping the MAOI drug. If you do not know if your prescription drug contains an MAOI, ask a doctor or pharmacist before taking this product.  
 • to make a child sleep  
**Ask a doctor before use if you have**  
 • liver disease • glaucoma • cough that occurs with too much phlegm (mucus)  
 • a breathing problem or chronic cough that lasts or as occurs with smoking, asthma, chronic bronchitis or emphysema • trouble urinating (due to enlarged prostate gland)  
**Ask a doctor or pharmacist before use if you are**  
 • taking sedatives or tranquilizers • taking the blood thinning drug warfarin  
**When using this product** • do not use more than directed  
 • excitability may occur, especially in children • marked drowsiness may occur • avoid alcoholic drinks  
 • be careful when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery • redness or swelling is present • new symptoms occur  
 • alcohol, sedatives, & tranquilizers may increase drowsiness  
**Stop use and ask a doctor if** • pain or cough gets worse or lasts more than 7 days • fever gets worse or lasts more than 3 days • redness or swelling is present • new symptoms occur  
 • cough comes back or occurs with rash or headache that lasts. These could be signs of a serious condition.  
**If pregnant or breast-feeding, ask a health professional before use.**  
**Keep out of reach of children. Overdose warning:** Taking more than the recommended dose can cause serious health problems. In case of overdose, get medical help or contact a Poison Control Center right away. Quick medical attention is critical for adults as well as for children even if you do not notice any signs or symptoms.

**Drug Facts (continued)**  
**Directions**  
 • take only as directed - see Overdose warning  
 • do not exceed 4 doses per 24 hours

adults & children 12 yrs & over	2 LiquiCaps with water every 6 hrs
children 4 to under 12 yrs	ask a doctor
children under 4 yrs	do not use

• when using other DayQuil or NyQuil products, carefully read each label to ensure correct dosing  
 • store at room temperature

**Other information**  
 • store at room temperature

**Inactive ingredients:** DSC Yellow No. 10, FD&C Blue No. 1, gelatin, glycerin, polyethylene glycol, povidone, propylene glycol, purified water, sorbitol sorbitan solution, titanium dioxide

**Questions? 1-800-251-3374**  
 www.vicks.com

**PARENTS:**  
 Learn more about our medicines at [www.DoNotUseCaution.org](http://www.DoNotUseCaution.org)

**Do Not Use if pouch is broken or torn.**

**TO OPEN**  
 PUSH IN TAB AND PULL OUT  
 See Full Drug Facts information on the back of this dispenser

Product repackaged and distributed with permission of the manufacturer by:  
 J.C. World Ball Wholesale Company, Inc. Hackensack, NJ 07601

9 10371 72402 6

25 PACKETS OF 2 LiquiCaps®

An example of a medicine label with instructions

It is very important to take medicines according to the instructions.

Take the medicine for as long as suggested.

Do not take more or less medicine than what is on the label or your pharmacist has told you.

**Medicines can help you feel better and get well when you are sick. But if you do not take medicines correctly, they can hurt you.**

Do not give or share your medicine with other people and don't take someone else's medicine.

A medicine that is good for someone else might not work for the illness you have and may make it worse by delaying the right treatment for you.

Antibiotics are very strong medicines and they should only be taken if advised by your doctor as they can have serious side effects if not taken properly.

Some medicines can cause problems (side effects). Side effects may be mild, like an upset stomach. Other side effects can be more serious, like damage to your liver.

If you notice that something is wrong with you, speak to your doctor or pharmacist. Ask for an interpreter if you need one. Interpreters are free.



An example of antibiotics

## What is a generic medicine?

Sometimes you can choose between a **'generic'** medicine and a brand name medicine.

Generic and brand name medicines work the same way. Generic medicine usually costs less.

If there is a generic option for the medicine you need, your pharmacist may ask you if you would like the 'generic' medicine instead of the brand name medicine.

If the pharmacist doesn't ask you, you can ask if they have a generic brand (a less expensive brand) of the medicine you need.



Brand



Generic

## Ask questions to make sure you understand your medicines

Ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist questions to be sure you understand how to use your medicine.

To use medicines safely, you need to know:

- › What the medicine is
- › Why you are using the medicine
- › How and when to use the medicine
- › If there are any medicines you shouldn't use with this one

If you forget how to use your medicine or if you don't understand the information on the label, you can also ask a pharmacist.

## How do I store my medicines correctly?

Medicines that are stored correctly last longer and work better.

- › Put your medicines in a safe place away from children and pets
- › Store your medicines in a cool, dry place. Places that are damp and warm, like the kitchen or bathroom can damage your medicines.

- › Keep medicines in their original containers, as they have the instructions on the label
- › Some medications need refrigeration. This is normally written on the label.
- › Throw away expired medicines and medicines you no longer use.

## How do medicines work?

- › Some medicines work quickly and others take time. For example: some pain killers (called analgesics) may take a few minutes to treat the pain. Antibiotic tablets may take more than 24 hours before you notice an infection improving, Antidepressants can typically take two weeks before you notice an improvement in mood.
- › If you are worried your medicines are not working or that your health is getting worse, you should go back to see your doctor immediately.
- › Some medicines work best on an empty stomach or can irritate the stomach so these are best taken with food.