

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 https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/download?ac=1065169&firstPass=false ("patients using sublingual GTN more frequently than twice per week should be considered for regular prophylactic anti-anginal therapy)	180 dose pump 200 dose pump	4 pumps 4 pumps	6 pumps 6 pumps	4 pumps 4 pumps	14 weeks 14 weeks	1 1
Reliever (blue) Inhalers e.g. salbutamol http://www.dontwasteabreath.com/view/reliever-inhaler (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 200 doses – 2 puffs per day 200 doses – less than 6 puffs per week 100 doses – 4-8 puffs per day 100 doses – 2 puffs per day 100 doses – less than 6 puffs per week 60 doses – 4-8 puffs per day 60 doses – 2 puffs per day 60 doses – less than 6 puffs per week	7 inhalers 4 inhalers 2 inhalers 15 inhalers 7 inhalers 3 inhalers 24 inhalers 12 inhalers 5 inhalers		7 inhalers 4 inhalers 2 inhalers 14 inhalers 7 inhalers 4 inhalers 28 inhalers 14 inhalers 7 inhalers	8 weeks 14 weeks 28 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 14 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks	1 1 1 2 1 4 2 1
Preventer (brown) Inhalers http://www.dontwasteabreath.com/view/preventer%E2%80%94inhaler	200 doses – 2 puffs twice daily 200 doses – 1 puff twice daily 120 doses – 2 puffs twice daily 120 doses – 1 puff twice daily 100 doses – 2 puffs twice daily 100 doses – 1 puff twice daily 60 doses – 2 puffs twice daily 60 doses – 1 puff twice daily	7 inhalers 4 inhalers 12 inhalers 6 inhalers 15 inhalers 7 inhalers 24 inhalers 12 inhalers		7 inhalers 4 inhalers 14 inhalers 7 inhalers 14 inhalers 7 inhalers 28 inhalers 14 inhalers	8 weeks 14 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks	1 1 2 1 2 1 4 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 https://www.gwh.nhs.uk/media/151202/emollients_prescribing_guideline_april-2017-final-3-.pdf	Adult dose per week: Face Both hands Scalp Both arms or both legs Trunk Groin & genitalia	15–30g 25–50g 50–100g 100–200g 400g 15–25g	12 x 150g 6 x 500g 12 x 500g 24 x 500g 12 x 2kg 10 x 150g		14 7 14 28 14 14	8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks	2 1 2 4 2 2
Emollient lotions https://www.gwh.nhs.uk/media/151202/emollients_prescribing_guideline_april-2017-final-3-.pdf	Adult dose per week: Face Both hands Scalp Both arms or both legs Trunk Groin & genitalia	100ml 200ml 200ml 200ml 500ml 100ml	10 x 500ml 20 x 500ml 20 x 500ml 20 x 500ml 52 x 500ml 10 x 500ml		14 21 21 21 56 14	8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks 8 weeks	2 3 3 3 8 2
Steroid Creams / Ointments Rule of measure is a Finger Tip Unit (FTU). Quantity depends on area to be applied. A hand and fingers (front & back) 1 FTU Front of chest and abdomen 7 FTUs Back and buttocks 7 FTUs Face and neck 2.5 FTUs An entire arm and hand 4 FTUs An entire leg and foot 8 FTUs https://patient.info/health/steroids/fingertip-units-for-topical-steroids	Adult doses: 1 FTU = 0.5g Calculation based on 4 FTU: 30g – 15 days supply 50g - 25 days supply 100g – 50 days supply		24 x 30g 14 x 50g 4 x 100g	4 x 100g or equivalent	28 14 4	8 weeks 8 weeks 14 weeks	4 2 1
Eye drops https://www.optometrystudents.com/write-prescription-quick-reference-guide/	Approx 30 drops per ml 5ml bottle equivalent to 150 drops. 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		