



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP

Minister for Health

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service and Cabinet

MEDIA RELEASE

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Limits on dispensing and sales of medicines

Medicine supplies in Australia are strong however demand for medicines has increased markedly over the past two weeks, resulting in some community pharmacies and wholesalers reporting temporary strain on the supply of some medicines.

This has led to challenges for many Australians seeking to purchase their ordinary and usual medicines in some areas.

As a result of this, the Australian Government, Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia are now requiring community pharmacists to enforce new limits on dispensing and sales of prescription and over-the-counter medicines.

This measure is also supported by the National Pharmaceutical Services Association, representing pharmaceutical wholesalers.

The new limits on dispensing and sales of prescription and over-the-counter medicines will ensure equitable access to medicines for all Australians.

From today:

- pharmacists will be required to limit dispensing of certain prescription products to one month's supply at the prescribed dose, and sales of certain over-the-counter medicines to a maximum of one unit per purchase
- pharmacists will be strongly encouraged to limit dispensing and sales of all other medicines to one month's supply or one unit
- salbutamol (Ventolin, Asmol and Airomir puffers) inhalers provided on an over-the-counter basis will be subject to new enhanced controls, including requiring pharmacists to confirm that supply is appropriate by confirmation of the patient's diagnosis and need for supply
- pharmacists will be required to locate some medicines, including children's paracetamol formulations, from front of shop to behind the pharmacy counter to assist in allocating supply equitably.

In addition, only one salbutamol (Ventolin, Asmol and Airomir puffers) or children's paracetamol paediatric product should be supplied per customer.

Authorised by Greg Hunt MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Somerville, Victoria.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and the National Pharmaceutical Services Association have agreed that these limits on pharmacy sales will be accompanied by limits on orders from wholesalers, to ensure equitable distribution of stock, including to regional and rural pharmacies.

These temporary limits will be reviewed at an appropriate stage in the future.

This is an important measure that will ensure Australians have ongoing access to the prescription medicines they need.

More information is available on the Therapeutic Goods Administration [website](#).

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