

## Media release

Thursday 7 December 2017

### Services available to you from community pharmacy throughout the holiday season

While some businesses and service providers are winding down for the year, community pharmacy is preparing for its busy season. Throughout the Christmas and New Year period most community pharmacies will remain open during regular working hours and weekends, and some will have extended open hours for your convenience.

Some of the services available from community pharmacies are detailed below, but pop in and have a chat with your pharmacy team to learn about the full range of health care services that are available to you and your family in the heart of your community.

#### Emergency supply of medicine

If you are away and forget your medicine, or you run out of your medicine, your community pharmacist can provide you with a 72-hour emergency supply. You must be able to demonstrate to the pharmacist that you are currently being treated with the medicine.

If you require medicine on emergency supply, there will be a cost involved which will depend on how expensive your medicine is. If you have been prescribed medicine, it is very important that you are taking it correctly. So, if you are caught short during the holiday period, speak with your pharmacy team to see how they can help.

#### Oral Contraceptive Pill

Pharmacists who have completed specific training are now able to supply selected oral contraceptives to women who have had them prescribed by a medical practitioner within the past three years. Women will need to have a private and confidential consultation with their community pharmacist to determine that it is appropriate for them to be provided the oral contraceptive.

This will be particularly beneficial for women who may have forgotten to get a repeat prescription and run out of their pill during the holiday period when general practice tends to be closed, or if women are away on holiday and have left their pill at home.

#### Emergency Contraceptive Pill

If you (or someone you know) has had unprotected sex and are worried about being pregnant, you may want to take an emergency contraceptive pill. This is also called the 'morning after pill'. The emergency contraceptive pill is available over the counter at some pharmacies.

You can read more about the ECP at [www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/sexual-health/emergency-contraception](http://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/sexual-health/emergency-contraception) or you can visit your local pharmacy and have a private and confidential talk about this with a pharmacist.

#### Urinary tract infection

If you or someone you know has a urinary tract infection (UTI), you may need to see a health care professional for antibiotics.

If you are a woman between 16 and 65 years then an accredited pharmacist may be able to provide you with antibiotics. An accredited pharmacist is trained to identify who they can treat and who needs to be referred to another health professional. Call your pharmacist first to check if they're accredited.

Your pharmacist will also be able to recommend methods of self-care to help relieve symptoms while the antibiotics kick in.

General symptoms of a UTI include:

- Pain, burning or stinging when you pass urine
- A sudden or constant urge to urinate – or need to go more often
- Pain in your lower abdomen, lower back or side
- Blood or pus (clouding) in your urine.

### **Smoking Cessation**

If you are thinking about quitting smoking, community pharmacy can now provide access to funded nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). Pop in and have a chat with your local pharmacy team about the type of NRT service they can provide to you.

### **Here for you over the holidays**

So, if you become unwell over the holiday period, make your local community pharmacy your first port of call. Your community pharmacist will be able to assess you and provide treatment and advice without the need for an appointment, or they will refer you to an alternative health care provider if required.

### **Pharmacy**

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