



COMDTINST 6570.5  
25 OCT 1991

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 6570.5

Subj: Nonprescription Medication Program

Ref: (a) COMDTINST 6570.4, Pharmacy Procurement and Dispensing Guidelines

1. **PURPOSE.** This instruction establishes policy and procedures for those Coast Guard units choosing to provide a non-prescription medication program to their beneficiaries. This directive applies to all units with health services personnel assigned.
2. **BACKGROUND.**
  - a. Recent trends show people are taking an increasingly active role in their health care. The average American faces a self-treatable problem every three days, usually for conditions such as colds, headaches, or mild skin irritations. Treating these conditions without costly physician visits has been a constant challenge to the health care system. In response, since 1976 more than 200 drug products, formerly classified as "prescription only", have been made available to the public without a prescription.
  - b. The 1951 Humphrey-Durham amendments to the 1938 Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act clarified the responsibility of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to establish criteria for assigning prescription or nonprescription drug status to products. To attain nonprescription drug status, the FDA must establish that a product is nonaddictive, is safe for use without the supervision of a licensed practitioner, and has directions and warnings which are given in terms likely to be read and understood by an ordinary individual, including an individual of low comprehension, under the customary conditions of purchase and use. Products, when classified as nonprescription, may be marketed and distributed by any commercial source. Retail pricing is often 3-4 times the Federal supply acquisition cost for these items and places a financial strain on Coast Guard beneficiaries.

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- c. Since the late 1970s, many Department of Defense and Coast Guard health care facilities have offered nonprescription drug programs to their beneficiaries.
3. **DISCUSSION.** A nonprescription drug program is not an entitlement, but rather an optional service offered by the military health care facility to its beneficiary population. These programs are always contingent upon adequate funding and should not be conducted at the expense of the availability of prescription items as addressed in reference (a). Without adequate guidance, it is possible for nonprescription drug programs to become a burden, both financially and administratively, to facilities. To avoid this, it is essential that strict limits be maintained as to quantities and types of products available. Items offered will be limited to inexpensive products available from the Defense Personnel Support Center which are prepackaged and prelabeled according to FDA requirements and ready for consumer use.
4. **POLICY.** Coast Guard nonprescription drug programs shall operate under the following guidelines:
  - a. Commanding officers of Coast Guard units with assigned health care personnel may elect to operate nonprescription drug programs. This instruction does not extend this authority to units staffed only by non-HS emergency medical technicians. Units electing to offer nonprescription drug programs shall inform their respective MLC, and verify that they will operate within these guidelines.
  - b. All Coast Guard health care facilities shall make condoms available to beneficiaries even if they elect not to offer a nonprescription drug program. Condoms shall be made available to beneficiaries under 18 years of age unless specifically forbidden by State law.
  - c. Items available shall be limited to those in enclosure (1). Units may elect not to offer every product from this list but shall not select products other than those listed.
  - d. A beneficiary family shall be limited to a maximum two items per week from the program. Occasionally, it may be necessary to extend this limit due to family size. Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committees (if available) and collateral duty pharmacy officers shall provide guidance for and monitor any such extensions.

4. e. Items shall only be available during the normal operating hours of the facility.
- f. Pharmacy or sick bay personnel shall monitor the program for perceived overuse. Individuals suspected of this shall be referred to a medical officer and may have their access to this privilege denied.
- g. All products must be dispensed in the manufacturer's FDA approved packaging with required instructions and warnings. Other locally packaged items are not authorized. Local Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committees may develop supplemental information sheets to provide additional dosage or drug information to the patient.
- h. Nonprescription drug program items shall not be dispensed to pregnant patients or non-active duty beneficiaries under 18 years of age. Local flight surgeons, via the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, shall determine which products may be acquired by personnel on flight status.
- i. Facilities offering this service shall keep quarterly statistics as to the quantity of items dispensed and the dollar value expended. This figure shall be separated from regular pharmacy workload statistics and not be counted as a prescription number. (Only those items which have been ordered by a prescriber with a written prescription shall be counted in the facility prescription number totals.)
- j. The patient is responsible for providing an authorized identification card to verify their eligibility.
- k. To receive a nonprescription item, patients must sign either a log or request form which certifies the following:
  - (1) "I do not wish to see a physician or other health care provider for advice before receiving these medications. I understand that the medication is for minor illnesses or conditions and that if symptoms worsen or do not improve within 48 hours, the person for whom the medication is intended should be seen by a medical provider."
  - (2) "I am not pregnant or under 18 years of age (unless active duty). If on flight status, I understand that I

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am only authorized to receive over-the-counter items approved by the flight surgeon."

- l. Individuals suspected of returning for medication for a non-resolving problem shall be referred to a medical officer for evaluation.
  - m. The log sheet or request form shall also contain the date, patient's name, and the name and quantity of the item(s) received.
  - n. Beneficiaries requesting medical advice that, in the opinion of pharmacy or sick bay personnel, is beyond their expertise, shall be referred to a medical officer.
  - o. Funding for independent duty HS assigned units (vessels, groups, etc.) deciding to offer this service, shall be from their unit's AFC-30 account.
5. **RESPONSIBILITIES.**
- a. Commandant (G-KOM) will review the list of authorized non-prescription drug products annually and update it as needed.
  - b. Maintenance and Logistics Commands (k) shall, during the Quality Assurance Site Survey process, ensure that those units providing nonprescription drug programs are conducting these programs as required by this instruction.
  - c. Coast Guard pharmacy officers with designated collateral duties shall provide guidance and assistance to units electing to offer this program.
6. **ACTION.** Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, unit commanding officers, and Commander, Coast Guard Activities Europe shall ensure compliance with the provisions of this instruction.

/s/ MICHAEL HUDGINS  
Chief, Office of Health and Safety

Encl: (1) List of Products Approved for Nonprescription Drug Programs  
Non-standard distribution:  
B:c MLCs (6 extra)  
C:d Fort Macon, Miami Beach, San Juan, Ketchikan, and Honolulu only  
C:e Philadelphia, Wilmington, Galena Park and Anchorage only

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- C:i Rockland, St. Petersburg, Grand Isle, Venice, Port O'Connor, Port Isabel, and Duluth only
- C:q Chesapeake CAMSLANT, Station Pacific-CAMSPAC only
- C:v Iwo Jima, Hokkaido, Kure Island, Marcus Island, Gesashi, Attu, Port Clarence, St. Paul Island, Estartit, Sellia Marina, Kargaburun and Lampedusa only

ENCLOSURE (1) TO COMDTINST 6570.5

**PRODUCTS APPROVED FOR NONPRESCRIPTION DRUG PROGRAMS**

ACETAMINOPHEN 10% DROPS, 15 ML NSN = 6505-01-203-6283 UI = PG  
COMMON BRAND NAME = TYLENOL DROPS  
ACETAMINOPHEN CHEWABLE 30 MG TABS, 30s, 48/PGNSN = 6505-01-174-1470 UI  
= PG COMMON BRAND NAME = TYLENOL CHEWABLE TABS  
ACETAMINOPHEN ORAL SOLN, 160 MG/5ML, 120 ML NSN = 6505-01-201-3458 UI  
= BT COMMON BRAND NAME = TYLENOL ELIXIR  
ACETAMINOPHEN TABS 325 MG USP, 50s NSN = 6505-01-017-1625 UI = BT  
COMMON BRAND NAME = TYLENOL TABLETS  
AL/MG HYDROX W SIMETH DS SUSP, 5 OZ, 48s NSN = 6505-00-149-0247 UI =  
BX COMMON BRAND NAME = MYLANTA II SUSPENSION  
BACITRACIN OINT USP, 15 GM, 12s NSN = 6505-00-159-6625 UI = PG  
COMMON BRAND NAME = BACITRACIN OINTMENT  
BROMPHENIRAMINE/PHENYLPROP ELIXIR, 4 OZ NSN = 6505-01-206-5979 UI =  
BT COMMON BRAND NAME = DIMETAPP ELIXIR  
CALAMINE LOTION USP, 118 ML NSN = 6505-00-687-4534 UI = BT COMMON  
BRAND NAME = CALAMINE LOTION  
CETYLPRIDIUM AND BENZOCAINE LOZ, 324s NSN = 6505-01-171-6051 UI =  
PG COMMON BRAND NAME = CEPACOL LOZENGES  
CONDOM, LUBRICATED, 3s x 144 NSN = 6515-00-117-8416 UI = PG  
COMMON BRAND NAME = CONDOMS, LUBRICATED  
GUAIFENESIN SYRUP WITH DEXTROMETHORPHAN, 4 OZNSN = 6505-01-318-1565 UI  
= BT COMMON BRAND NAME = ROBITUSSIN DM  
LIPSTICK, ANTICHAP 4.2 GM, 100s NSN = 6508-01-265-0079 UI = PG  
COMMON BRAND NAME = CHAPSTICK  
METHYL SALICYLATE AND MENTHOL OINT, 33 GM, 6sNSN = 6505-01-060-9935 UI  
= BX COMMON BRAND NAME = BENGAY OINTMENT  
PSEUDOEPHEDRINE & TRIPROLIDINE TABS, 24s NSN = 6505-01-142-5595 UI =  
PG COMMON BRAND NAME = ACTIFED TABLETS  
PSEUDOEPHEDRINE 30 MG TABS, 24s NSN = 6505-00-149-0098 UI = CO  
COMMON BRAND NAME = SUDAFED TABLETS  
TOLNAFTATE POWDER, 45 GM, 6s NSN = 6505-01-037-6536 UI = PG  
COMMON BRAND NAME = TINACTIN POWDER