# Sodium content of medicines for pain, cold and flu

Prepared by a UK Medicines Information ([UKMi](http://www.ukmi.nhs.uk/ukmi/about/default.asp?pageRef=1)) team for NHS healthcare professionals

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## Summary

* Some medicines contain significant amounts of sodium, including many effervescent or soluble analgesics. The amount of sodium in non-soluble analgesics is insignificant. Orodispersible preparations do not contain significant amounts of sodium.
* This Medicines Q&A lists the sodium content of medicines for treating pain, cold and flu, and can be used to help find preparations with lower sodium content.

**Effervescent/soluble analgesics**

*Note:* NHS England [advises](https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf) CCGs that a prescription for treatment of conditions associated with pain, discomfort and mild fever will not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care [1].

| **Name of** **preparation and form** | **Company or companies (MAH$)** | **Will be reimbursed# on NHS prescription** | **Approximate sodium content**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Per dose\*\*** | **Per maximum daily dose\*\*** |
| Alka-Seltzer Original effervescent tablets | Bayer | ✓ | 20.7mmol (477mg) per tablet | 166mmol |
| Alka-Seltzer XSeffervescent tablets | ✓ | 20.5mmol (472mg) per tablet | 164mmol |
| Altridexamol 1,000mg effervescent tablets | Alpex | ✓ | 19mmol (438mg) per tablet | 76mmol |
| Anadin Extra Soluble tablets | GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare | 🗶 | Low sodium\*  | Not significant |
| Asda Headache and Upset Stomach Relief effervescent powder | Asda (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 12.5mmol (288mg) per sachet | 50mmol |
| Aspirin 75mg dispersible tablets | Various | ✓ | Low sodium\*  | Not significant |
| Aspirin 300mg dispersible/soluble tablets | Various | ✓ | Low sodium\*  | Not significant |
| Beechams Powders powder for oral solution | GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare | 🗶 | Low sodium\*  | Not significant |
| Boots Headache and Upset Stomach Relief effervescent powder | Boots (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 12.5mmol (288mg) per sachet | 50mmol |
| Boots Paracetamol and Codeine Extra effervescent tablets | Boots (Sanofi) | ✓ | 15.7mmol (362mg) per tablet | 126mmol |
| Boots Paracetamol Extra Soluble tablets | Boots (Fannin) | ✓ | 17.8mmol (409mg) per tablet | 142mmol |
| Boots Recovery effervescent powder | Boots (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 12.5mmol (288mg) per sachet | 50mmol |
| Brufen 600mg effervescent granules | AbbVie (Mylan) | ✓ | 8.6mmol (197mg) per sachet | 34mmol |
| Calpol Six Plus Fast Melts orodispersible tablets | McNeil | ✓ | No sodium | None |
| Co-codamol 8/500 dispersible, effervescent or soluble tablets | Accord | ✓ | 18.2mmol (419mg) per tablet | 146mmol |
| Activase | 18.9mmol (434mg) per tablet | 151mmol |
| Fannin/Kent  | 19mmol (438mg) per tablet | 152mmol |
| Zentiva | 16.9mmol (388mg) per tablet | 135mmol |
| #As confirmed by absence from, or presence in, Part XVIIIA of the July 2021 Drug Tariff – see [Limitations](#Limitations).\*Low sodium denotes preparations that contain <1mmol of sodium per usual adult dose, essentially ‘sodium-free’.\*\*The doses shown are for general comparison and do not imply therapeutic equivalence.$MAH Marketing Authorisation Holder (stated if different from company marketing the product). |
| Co-codamol 30/500 effervescent tablets | Manx, Medley  | ✓ | 17.8mmol (410mg) per tablet | 143mmol |
| Mercury | 18mmol (413mg) per tablet | 144mmol |
| Cipla, Fannin, Kent (Fannin) | 19mmol (438mg) per tablet | 152mmol |
| Zentiva | 16.9mmol (388mg) per tablet | 135mmol |
| Codipar effervescent tablets | Advanz (Mercury) | ✓ | 16.5mmol (379mg) per tablet | 132mmol |
| Codis 500 dispersible tablets | Reckitt Benckiser | ✓ | Low sodium\* | Not significant |
| Disprin dispersible tablets | ✓ | Low sodium\* | Not significant |
| Disprin Direct dispersible tablets | ✓ | No sodium | None |
| Effentora 100microgram buccal tablets | Teva | ✓ | 0.43mmol (10mg) per tablet | Variable  |
| Effentora 200microgram, 400microgram, 600microgram and 800microgram buccal tablets | Teva | ✓ | 0.87mmol (20mg) per tablet | Variable  |
| Feldene Melt 20mg fast dissolving tablets | Pfizer | ✓ | No sodium  | None |
| Headache and Upset Stomach Relief effervescent powder | Wrafton/Perrigo | ✓ | 12.5mmol (288mg) per sachet | 50mmol |
| Imigran Radis50mg or 100mg dispersible tablets | GlaxoSmithKline | ✓ | Low sodium\* | Not significant |
| Maxalt Melt 10mg oral lyophilisates | Organon (Merck Sharp & Dohme) | ✓ | No sodium | None |
| Migramax 900mg/10mg powder for roal solution | Zentiva | ✓ | No sodium  | None |
| Nurofen Meltlets 200mg orodispersible tablets | Reckitt Benckiser | ✓ | Low sodium\* | Not significant |
| Nurofen Meltlets Lemon orodispersible tablets | ✓ | Low sodium\* | Not significant |
| Nurofen Recovery | ✓ | Low sodium\* | Not significant |
| Panadol Actifast caplets | GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare | ✓ | 7.5mmol (173mg) per caplet | 60mmol |
| Panadol Actifast soluble tablets | ✓ | 18.6mmol (427mg) per tablet | 149mmol |
| Panadol Soluble 500mg tablets | 🗶 | 18.6mmol (427mg) per tablet | 149mmol |
| Panadol Extra soluble tablets | 🗶 | 18.6mmol (427mg) per tablet | 149mmol |
| Paracetamol 500mg effervescent tablets | Accord | ✓ | 18.2mmol (419mg) per tablet | 146mmol |
| Boots (Fannin) | 19mmol (438mg) per tablet | 152mmol |
| Fannin | 19mmol (438mg) per tablet | 152mmol |
| Paracetamol 500mg soluble tablets | Activase, Milpharm | ✓ | 17mmol (392mg) per tablet | 136mmol |
| Zentiva | 16.9mmol (388mg) per tablet | 135mmol |
| Paracetamol 1,000mg effervescent tablets | Apollo | ✓ | 14.3mmol (330mg) per tablet | 57mmol |
| Paracetamol Seltzer 500mg effervescent tablets | Zentiva | ✓ | 16.9mmol (388mg) per tablet | 135mmol |
| Paracetamol 500mg and caffeine 65mg effervescent tablets | Boots (Fannin), Fannin | ✓ | 17.8mmol (409mg) per tablet | 142mmol |
| Paracodol soluble tablets | Bayer | ✓ | 16.7mmol (383mg) per tablet | 134mmol |
| Parasolve 500mg effervescent tablets | Kent | ✓ | 19mmol (438mg) per tablet | 152mmol |
| Solpadeine Headache soluble tablets | Omega  | ✓ | 18.6mmol (427mg) per tablet | 149mmol |
| Solpadeine Max soluble tablets | ✓ | 18.6mmol (427mg) per tablet | 149mmol |
| Solpadeine Plus soluble tablets | ✓ | 18.6mmol (427mg) per tablet | 149mmol |
| Solpadol effervescent tablets | Sanofi | ✓ | 16.9mmol (388mg) per tablet | 135mmol |
| Solpaone 1,000mg soluble tablets | Accord | ✓ | 18.9mmol (435mg) per tablet | 76mmol |
| Superdrug Headache and Upset Stomach Relief effervescent powder | Superdrug (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 12.5mmol (288mg) per sachet | 50mmol |
| Superdrug Paracetamol Stomach Seltzer 500mg effervescent tablets | Superdrug (Zentiva) | ✓ | 16.9mmol (388mg) per tablet | 135mmol |
| #As confirmed by absence from, or presence in, Part XVIIIA of the July 2021 Drug Tariff – see [Limitations](#Limitations).\*Low sodium denotes preparations that contain <1mmol of sodium per usual adult dose, essentially ‘sodium-free’.\*\*The doses shown are for general comparison and do not imply therapeutic equivalence.$MAH Marketing Authorisation Holder (stated if different from company marketing the product). |
| Tesco Recovery effervescent powder | Tesco (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 12.5mmol (288mg) per sachet | 50mmol |
| Tramacet effervescent tablets | Grünenthal  | ✓ | 7.8mmol (179mg) per tablet | 62mmol |
| Tylex effervescent tablets | UCB Pharma | ✓ | 14.2mmol (327mg) per tablet | 114mmol |
| Ultramol soluble tablets | Sanofi | ✓ | 16.9mmol (388mg) per tablet | 135mmol |
| Zamadol Melt 50mg orodispersible tablets | Mylan | ✓ | No sodium | None |
| Zolmitriptan 2.5mg and 5mg orodispersible tablets | Accord (Actavis), Aspire, Crescent, Genus, Lupin, Torrent, Waymade, Zentiva  | ✓ | Low sodium\* | Not significant |
| Mylan, Glenmark | No sodium | None |
| Zomig Rapimelt 2.5mg and 5mg orodispersible tablets | Grünenthal  | ✓ | Low sodium\* | Not significant |
| Zydol 50mg soluble tablets | Grünenthal | ✓ | Low sodium\* | Not significant |
| #As confirmed by absence from, or presence in, Part XVIIIA of the July 2021 Drug Tariff – see [Limitations](#Limitations).\*Low sodium denotes preparations that contain <1mmol of sodium per usual adult dose, essentially ‘sodium-free’.\*\*The doses shown are for general comparison and do not imply therapeutic equivalence.$MAH Marketing Authorisation Holder (stated if different from company marketing the product). |

### Cold and flu effervescent/soluble preparations

*Note:* NHS England [advises](https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf) CCGs that a prescription for treatment of coughs, colds and nasal congestion should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is self-limiting and will clear up on its own without the need for treatment [1].

| **Name of** **preparation and form** | **Company or companies (MAH$)** | **Will be reimbursed# on NHS prescription** | **Approximate sodium content** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Per dose unit\*\*** | **Per maximum daily dose\*\*** |
| Abdine Cold Relief powder for oral solution | Bell Sons & Co | ✓ | 6.1mmol (140mg) per sachet | 24mmol |
| Abdine Hot Lemon Cold Relief powder for oral solution | ✓ | 6.1mmol (140mg) per sachet | 24mmol |
| Asda Flu-Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold powder for oral solution | Asda (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5mmol (117mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Asda Max Strength Cold and Flu Relief Sachets Blackcurrant powder for oral solution  | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Asda Max Strength Cold and Flu Relief Sachets Lemon powder for oral suspension  | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Beechams Breathe Clear Hot Honey & Lemon Menthol Flavour powder for oral solution | GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare | ✓ | 5.9mmol (135mg) per sachet | 35mmol |
| Beechams Cold & Flu Hot Blackcurrant powder for oral solution | ✓ | 8.4mmol (193mg) per sachet | 50mmmol |
| Beechams Cold & Flu Hot Lemon powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.7mmol (130mg) per sachet | 34mmol |
| Beechams Cold & Flu Hot Lemon and Honey powder for oral solution | ✓ | 6.7mmol (153mg) per sachet | 40mmol |
| #As confirmed by absence from, or presence in, Part XVIIIA of the July 2021 Drug Tariff – see [Limitations](#Limitations).\*Low sodium denotes preparations that contain <1mmol of sodium per usual adult dose, essentially ‘sodium-free’.\*\*The doses shown are for general comparison and do not imply therapeutic equivalence.$MAH Marketing Authorisation Holder (stated if different from company marketing the product). |
| Beechams Cold Relief Orange Flavour effervescent tablets | GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare | ✓ | 18.6mmol (427mg) per tablet | 149mmol |
| Beechams Flu-Plus Hot Berry Fruits powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 21mmol |
| Beechams Flu-Plus Hot Lemon powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.7mmol (131mg) per sachet | 23mmol |
| Beechams Powders powder for oral solution | 🗶 | Low sodium\* | Not significant |
| Boots Cold & Flu Relief Echinacea effervescent tablets | Boots (SwissCaps) | ✓ | 17mmol (392mg) per tablet | 34mmol |
| Boots Flu-Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold powder for oral solution | Boots (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5mmol (117mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Boots Max Strength Cold & Flu Relief Blackcurrant Flavour powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Boots Max Strength Cold & Flu Relief Lemon Flavour powder for oral suspension | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Boots Ultra Cold & Flu Relief All In One powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5mmol (117mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Co-operative Max Strength Cold & Flu Relief powder for oral suspension | Co-op (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Essential Waitrose Max Strength Cold & Flu Relief powder for oral suspension | Waitrose (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Galpharm Flu-Max 4-In-One Relief powder for oral solution | Galpharm (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5mmol (117mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Galpharm Flu-Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5mmol (117mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Galpharm Max Strength Cold & Flu Blackcurrant Flavour powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Galpharm Max Strength Cold & Flu Lemon Flavour powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Health Essentials Max Strength Cold & Flu Relief Blackcurrant Flavour powder for oral solution | Health Essentials (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Health Essentials Max Strength Cold and Flu Relief Lemon Flavour powder for oral suspension | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Lemsip Cold & Flu Blackcurrant powder for oral solution | Reckitt Benckiser | ✓ | 5.2mmol (119mg) per sachet | 21mmol |
| Lemsip Cold & Flu Lemon powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.3mmol (121mg) per sachet | 21mmol |
| Lemsip Cold & Flu Breathe Easy powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.3mmol (121mg) per sachet | 21mmol |
| Lemsip Cough Max for Chesty Cough & Cold powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.6mmol (129mg) per sachet | 22mmol |
| Lemsip Cough Max for Mucus Cough & Cold 1,000mg/200mg/12.2mg powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.6mmol (129mg) per sachet | 22mmol |
| Lemsip Max All In One Breathe Easy powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.6mmol (129mg) per sachet | 22mmol |
| Lemsip Max All in One Lemon powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.6mmol (129mg) per sachet | 22mmol |
| Lemsip Max All in One Wild Berry & Hot Orange powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.6mmol (129mg) per sachet | 22mmol |
| #As confirmed by absence from, or presence in, Part XVIIIA of the July 2021 Drug Tariff – see [Limitations](#Limitations).\*Low sodium denotes preparations that contain <1mmol of sodium per usual adult dose, essentially ‘sodium-free’.\*\*The doses shown are for general comparison and do not imply therapeutic equivalence.$MAH Marketing Authorisation Holder (stated if different from company marketing the product). |
| Lemsip Max Cold & Flu Blackcurrant powder for oral solution  | Reckitt Benckiser | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Lemsip Max Cold & Flu Lemon powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.6mmol (129mg) per sachet | 22mmol |
| Lemsip Max Flu Lemon powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.3mmol (122mg) per sachet | 21mmol |
| Lemsip Max Honey & Ginger Flavour powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.6mmol (129mg) per sachet | 22mmol |
| LloydsPharmacy Flu-Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold powder for oral solution | LloydsPharmacy (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5mmol (117mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| LloydsPharmacy Max Strength Cold and Flu Relief Sachets powder for oral suspension | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Morrisons Flu-Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold powder for oral solution | Morrisons (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5mmol (117mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Morrisons Max Strength Cold & Flu Relief Blackcurrant Flavour powder for oral solution | Morrisons (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Morrisons Max Strength Cold and Flu Relief Lemon Flavour powder for oral suspension | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Night Nurse Hot Lemon Menthol powder for oral solution | GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare | ✓ | 5.3mmol (122mg) per sachet | 5.3mmol |
| Numark Max Strength Cold and Flu Relief Sachets powder for oral suspension | Numark (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Optipharma Max Strength Cold & Flu Relief powder for oral suspension | Optipharma (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Sainsbury’s Flu-Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold powder for oral solution  | Sainsbury’s (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5.1mmol (117mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Sainsbury’s Healthcare Max Strength Cold & Flu Relief Blackcurrant Flavour powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Sainsbury’s Healthcare Max Strength Cold and Flu Relief Lemon Flavour powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Superdrug Max Strength Cold & Flu Relief Sachets Blackcurrant powder for oral solution | Superdrug (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Superdrug Flu-Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5mmol (117mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Superdrug Max Strength Cold and Flu Relief Sachets powder for oral suspension | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Tesco Flu-Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold powder for oral solution | Tesco (Wrafton/Perrigo) | ✓ | 5mmol (117mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Tesco Health Max Strength Cold & Flu Relief Blackcurrant Flavour powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Tesco Max Cold & Flu Relief Lemon Flavour powder for oral suspension | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Vicks Cold & Flu Care Daymed Complete Hot Drink powder for oral solution | Procter & Gamble | ✓ | 6.8mmol (157mg) per sachet | 27mmol |
| Vicks Cold & Flu Care Daymed Plus Hot Drink powder for oral solution | ✓ | 6.8mmol (157mg) per sachet | 27mmol |
| #As confirmed by absence from, or presence in, Part XVIIIA of the July 2021 Drug Tariff – see [Limitations](#Limitations).\*Low sodium denotes preparations that contain <1mmol of sodium per usual adult dose, essentially ‘sodium-free’.\*\*The doses shown are for general comparison and do not imply therapeutic equivalence.$MAH Marketing Authorisation Holder (stated if different from company marketing the product). |
|  |
| Vicks Cold & Flu Max Strength Hot Drink Lemon powder for oral solution | Procter & Gamble | ✓ | Low sodium\* | Not significant |
| Wilkinson Max Strength Cold and Flu Relief powder for oral solution | Wilkinson (Wrafton/ Perrigo) | ✓ | 5.1mmol (118mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| Wilko Flu-Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold powder for oral solution | ✓ | 5mmol (117mg) per sachet | 20mmol |
| #As confirmed by absence from, or presence in, Part XVIIIA of the July 2021 Drug Tariff – see [Limitations](#Limitations).\*Low sodium denotes preparations that contain <1mmol of sodium per usual adult dose, essentially ‘sodium-free’.\*\*The doses shown are for general comparison and do not imply therapeutic equivalence.$MAH Marketing Authorisation Holder (stated if different from company marketing the product). |

Limitations

* This list is not exhaustive – it specifically does not include parenteral preparations, and it does not include every generic version of a medicine where more than one is available.
* Formulations may be subject to change, but the information contained in this document is accurate at the time of preparation.
* The doses shown in the tables are for general comparison and do not imply therapeutic equivalence.

### This Medicines Q&A notes the presence of products in Part XVIIIA of the Drug Tariff (‘the blacklist’). Prescriptions for medicines on the blacklist will not be passed for payment. Medicines with similar names may be passed for payment as processing software looks for the specific wording in the blacklist. For example, ‘Codis Soluble Tablets’ and ‘Rennie Tablets’ are ‘blacklisted’ but ‘Codis 500’ dispersible tablets and ‘Rennie Extra Tablets’ are not. ‘Tums Tablets’ are blacklisted but ‘Tums Assorted Fruit Antacid Tablets’ are not.

### References

1. NHS England. Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs [Internet]. March 2018 [cited 13/05/2021]. Available from: [www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf](http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf)

### Bibliography

The following sources were used to assemble the tables of sodium content:

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* NHS Business Services Authority. July 2021 Drug Tariff [Internet] [cited 07/07/2021]. Available from: [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/drug-tariff/back-copies-drug-tariff](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/drug-tariff/back-copies-drug-tariff)
* PAGB. OTC Directory Online [Internet] [cited May 2021]. Available from: [www.otcdirectory.co.uk/](http://www.otcdirectory.co.uk/)

## Quality Assurance

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### Search strategy (20/04/2021; original search done 03/02/2006)

1. In-house database/ resources
2. European Medicines Agency [www.ema.europa.eu](http://www.ema.europa.eu)
3. Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/medicines-and-healthcare-products-regulatory-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/medicines-and-healthcare-products-regulatory-agency)
4. PAGB OTC Directory Online [www.otcdirectory.co.uk/](http://www.otcdirectory.co.uk/)