

# Medication Expiry Date Guidance

MANUFACTURERS EXPIRY DATES	WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?
'Use by'	Use by the end of the month e.g. Use by July = Use by 31 <sup>st</sup> July
'Use before'	Use before the beginning of the month e.g. Use before May = Use before 1 <sup>st</sup> May
'Expiry date'	Expires at the end of the Month e.g. Expiry date June = Expires on 30 <sup>th</sup> June

**Top Tip:** It is good practice to record on the tube, bottle or pump the day you opened the product, as some products expire one month after opening, again refer to the manufacturers recommendations.

INTERNAL MEDICINES	EXPIRY DATE
Liquids (Internal)	<b>6 months</b> from opening or manufacturer's recommendation if shorter (if unopened then manufacturer's expiry)
Antibiotic liquids	Manufacturer's expiry or as stated by the supplying phar-
Medication in original blister packs	<b>Manufacturer's expiry</b>
Medication in dosette boxes/MDS	As stated by pharmacist filling the device
Glyceryl Trinitrate tablets	<b>8 weeks</b> after opening

Many of the eye drops & ointments can have an expiry longer than a month. Many of the newer lubricants (classed as CE devices) have an expiry of 2, 3 or 6 months depending on brand, so please refer to the manufactures information for more details.

DROPS	EXPIRY DATE
Ear Drops	Manufacturer's expiry
Eye drops and Eye Ointment	Manufacturer's expiry
Nose Drops	Manufacturer's expiry

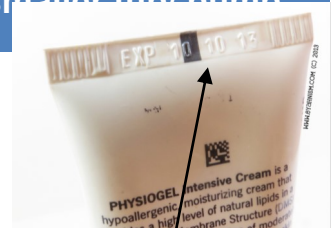
INJECTIONS & IRRIGATIONS	EXPIRY DATES
Injections (Ampoules) and injections (multi dose	Manufacturer's recommendation
Injections (multi dose with preservative used by IV	Manufacturer's recommendation
Injections (multi dose with preservative used by non- IV route)	Manufacturer's recommendation.
Irrigations (without preservative)	Manufacturer's recommendation and discard
Irrigations (with preservatives)	One working session (e.g. Clinic)

Type of Cream/Ointment and container	Advisory expiry date after opening (unless otherwise stated by manufacturer)
Tubs of creams & ointment	Three months
Creams and ointments that have been decanted into a smaller container	One month If dispensed from pharmacy the label should specify expiry date.
Creams or ointments made specifically for the patient	Discuss with the dispensing pharmacy
Pump dispenser packs of creams or ointments	Refer to manufacturer's expiry
Tubes of creams or ointments	Three months
Liqnfttfvjbn?vnbmfvfvfuids/ lotions	Six months
Bnath oils	Six months

**Remember if not using a complete tub consider requesting a smaller tub/ pump**

### Identifying the manufacturer's expiry.

Some creams come with an expiry date logo on (see example below). The logo contains a picture of a jar with a semi-opened lid, with a number next to the letter M, which stands for "Months". This means that from the moment you open that jar, bottle, tube, etc. you should discard it after a certain number of months. So for this example you should discard after 12 months of opening.



Some products will say "see crimp for expiry" this is where you need to look.

## Applying Corticosteroid Cream

Fingertip unit (FTU) is the recommended quantity to be used when applying corticosteroid creams



One FTU is enough to cover two adult palms or the flat of an adult hand with the fingers together.



**Fingertip units (FTU) apply to corticosteroid creams only e.g. Betamethasone, Clobetasone and Hydrocortisone**

Area of skin to be treated (adults)	Size is roughly	Number of FTUs needed.
A hand and fingers (front and back)	About 2 adult hands	1 FTU
Front of chest and abdomen	About 14 adult hands	7 FTUs
Back and buttocks	About 14 adult hands	7 FTUs
Face and neck	About 5 adult hands	2.5 FTUs
An entire arm and hand	About 8 adult hands	4 FTUs
An entire leg and foot	About 16 adult hands	8 FTUs