



### Important information on OTC (over the counter) Products

First and foremost, patients who are not sure if an OTC medication is safe to take should speak with someone on their transplant team before taking any medication.

OTC medications can affect how well transplant medications work, worsen or add additional side effects, or affect other medical problems that could impact a renal transplant patient's quality and quantity of life. Talk to your local pharmacist.

Below is a list of OTC medications approved by the SPH Renal transplant team. Patients whose condition or symptoms are not responding to these medications or get worse should call their health care provider.

Please remember that you need to notify your transplant team of any medications you are being started on even if the prescribing physician says they have checked and the medication is safe.

Problem/Symptom	Generic Medication	Brand Medication
Low grade fever Joint aches Headache	Acetaminophen *notify your transplant nurse if you fever rises 2 degrees or more above your normal temperature	Tylenol (plain)
Cough	Dextromethorphan	Robitussin Cough Benylin DM Any of the DM medications are OK <b>Avoid cough suppressants that contain decongestants ie DM-D or DM-DE</b>
Sneezing Runny nose Allergies	Diphenhydramine hydrochloride fexofenidine cetuzine loratadine	Benadryl , or non-sedating antihistamines such as Allegra, Reactine or Claritin <b>Avoid</b> combination medications that may add <b>de-congestants</b> to these anti-histamines.
Stuffed up sinus	xylometazoline	Nasal spray such as Otrivin for a maximum of three days. <b>Avoid</b> oral medications such as <b>sudafed</b>



### **Vaccines**

There are no contraindications to the use of any inactivated vaccines at least **three months after** your transplant. Live vaccines are generally contraindicated. The use of vaccines should be discussed with your physician and is considered after assessment of the risks and benefits. This means that you should have an annual flu vaccine unless you are allergic to it. Pneumococcal vaccine is also safe. If you are travelling, please check with a travel health center as to what vaccines are recommended. You may let the travel health center know that you can have inactivated (killed) vaccine but not to use live vaccine.

### **Prescription Refills**

In order to try and eliminate some of the many phone calls we receive from various pharmacies we ask that patients please request their medications while attending clinic. This includes all the medications that you take (not just your immunosuppression medications). Please ensure you have enough medication until your next clinic visit. **Never run out of medications. Always make sure you have enough.**

### **Herbal Products**

Herbal products, herbal remedies and some herbal teas should be avoided after transplant. Many herbal products can interact with immunosuppressant levels and the immune system in general. An example of this is St. Johns Wort, ginseng and Echinacea.

### **Sunblock**

Due to the increased risk of skin cancer seen in transplant recipients receiving immunosuppressive medication all transplant recipients should be advised to wear a minimum of **SPF 30** while outside at all times

### **Grapefruit Juice**

Grapefruit causes a severe increase to the tacrolimus and cyclosporine levels. Avoid grapefruit and juice, fruit juice blends containing grapefruit and citrus soft drinks such as Fresca.