

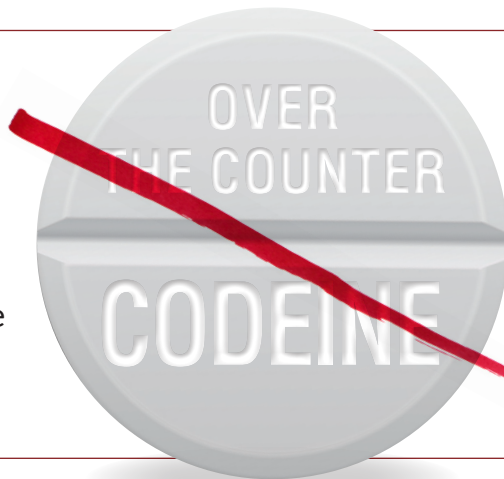
Codeine

Know your options

plan ahead

From **1 February 2018** medicines containing codeine will only be available by prescription.

These medications are used to treat pain. Codeine is also sometimes used in cold and flu medicines.



If you live in a rural or remote area and you think that this change will affect you, it's a good idea to know your options and plan ahead.

Getting advice and assistance

For short-term pain, cough or colds

Most people should be able to manage their short-term (acute) pain or cough and cold symptoms with other medicines from the chemist that don't contain codeine.

Talk to a pharmacist

You can get advice on what short-term pain medication is best for you by going to a chemist and talking to the pharmacist.

For longer term pain

If you normally take medicines with codeine for ongoing (chronic) pain you should talk to a health practitioner about your pain management options. Codeine is only recommended for a maximum of three days and is not considered an effective treatment for chronic pain.

The best place to get advice and assistance will depend on the health services available in your area and your personal preference.

Visit your health practitioner

If you have access to a local GP, they can provide information and help with managing your pain and write you a prescription if you need one. If they feel you need extra help to manage chronic pain they might refer you

to see a specialist – either in person or through a service called Telehealth that is used to deliver health services across Australia without the need for travel.

Go to a community health centre or remote health service

If you don't have a local GP, you can get advice and help at a community health centre or a remote health service in your area. Remote area nurses and registered nurses can also provide advice and, in some areas, they can write prescriptions.

Visit your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Medical services can provide holistic and culturally appropriate advice and care on all health and medical issues including pain management.

Get free advice over the phone

For free health advice 24 hours, 7 days a week, you can call Healthdirect Australia on **1800 022 222**.

Healthdirect can provide you with advice on all health topics, including pain management. They can also help you locate your nearest health services and chemists.

Useful resources

For 24-hour, free health advice and information, nationwide

- Call Healthdirect Australia on **1800 022 222** or visit www.healthdirect.gov.au

For information on community health centres and remote health services in your area call

- 13 2281 | **ACT**
- (02) 9391 9000 | **NSW**
- (08) 8999 5511 | **NT**
- 13 43 25 84 | (07) 3234 0111 | **QLD**
- (08) 8226 6000 | **SA**
- 1300 135 513 | **TAS**
- (08) 9222 4222 | **WA**
- 1300 650 172 | **VIC**

For information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Medical Services in your area

- Visit the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet website at www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au

For information about codeine, changes to availability and management of chronic pain

- Visit the Therapeutic Goods Administration Codeine Information Hub at www.tga.gov.au/codeine-info-hub
- Read the NPS MedicineWise facts on codeine at www.nps.org.au/medical-info/consumer-info/medicines-with-codeine-what-you-need-to-know
- Check out Real Relief to find out more about managing chronic pain www.realrelief.org.au

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www.ruralhealth.org.au/codeine

This resource was developed by the National Rural Health Alliance with funding assistance from the Australian Government.

