

MEDIA RELEASE

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Community pharmacies are holiday heroes

Community pharmacies are holiday heroes for families who have health emergencies or run out of medicines while away from home, says the Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand (Inc) President, Karen Crisp.

Ms Crisp says holidaymakers can still access good pharmacy care by looking out for the Guild member sign - a yellow cross on a blue background.

Pharmacies are open over the holiday period for urgent and last minute healthcare advice and people should make a note of their usual pharmacy's name and phone number, so they can get assistance should the need arise, even when they are out of town.

She says people taking medication should remember to make a checklist before going on holiday.

"It is important for people to ensure they have continuity of supply for whatever medications or medicines they are taking when access to regular healthcare professionals may be affected by travel and public holidays."

Christmas can be stressful on a number of fronts so people are advised to get enough sleep, exercise and good nutrition to support their immune systems.

Pharmacists can provide advice for treatment for many minor ailments and will advise patients to consult a doctor, if appropriate treatment is not available from the pharmacy.

She reminds people not to mix medicines with alcohol and, in the lead up to the festive period, make the effort to check medicines supplies because many pharmacies will close for a couple of days over Christmas.

Plenty of rich food over the Christmas period can result in heartburn and indigestion, so talk to a pharmacist if you need relief from these symptoms. Rehydration sachets are useful for replacing fluids and salts lost from diarrhoea or vomiting. Always tell the pharmacist about medicines you are taking, as diarrhoea and vomiting can affect the way some medicines work.

Other summer health issues that pharmacies can assist with include treatment for pain and fever, first aid, insect bites and stings, travel sickness and sunburn.

Remember that medicines can be affected by light and high temperatures so try to store them in a cool place out of direct sunlight.

Lastly, in a Christmas message to smokers, Ms Crisp says pharmacists are readily available to advise about support and products that can help people give up smoking and it would be a great gift to the whole family.

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Notes:

- The Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand (Inc) is a national membership organisation representing community pharmacy owners. We provide leadership on all issues affecting the sector and we advocate for the business interests of community pharmacy.
- For additional information on the Guild and community pharmacy, please go to www.pgnz.org.nz.