

# GSCF Brief on the Value of Self-Care in AMR Containment

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Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a global health crisis, threatening lives and healthcare systems worldwide. It requires a multi-faceted and coordinated approach to contain its impact. The Global Self-Care Federation (GSCF) represents associations and manufacturers in the self-care industry, working closely with members and stakeholders to make evidence-based self-care products and solutions available. GSCF advocates for the responsible use of non-prescription antimicrobials to support global AMR strategies, in line with the World Health Organization's goals. Non-prescription antimicrobials (NPAs) have a key role to play in AMR containment - when used appropriately, NPAs support infection prevention and control (IPC) and can reduce the need for prescription antibiotics. This brief highlights common health conditions treated with NPAs and the types of products available in self-care, showing how these can support AMR containment when treatment duration and dosage are respected.

## Conditions in Scope

NPAs are effective for managing minor infections and preventing their escalation into more severe conditions, by inhibiting or eliminating microorganisms. Common conditions addressed by NPAs include:



### Minor wounds & infections

Cuts, scrapes, burns, conjunctivitis, superficial skin infections.



### Viral infections

Cold sores, genital herpes.



### Fungal infections

Athlete's foot, thrush, ringworm, fungal nails.



### Parasitic infections

Pinworms, lice, scabies.



### General infection prevention

Skin hygiene disinfection to reduce pathogen transmission.

By addressing these conditions early and effectively, NPAs reduce the need for systemic treatments and help prevent unnecessary antibiotic use.



## Products in Scope

NPAs encompass a wide range of products available in non-prescription settings. For more detail, see Annex 1 below.

## Maximizing Impact

To harness the full potential of NPAs in AMR containment GSCF commits to:

Advocate for increased access to NPAs while safeguarding adherence to proper dosage, timing, and treatment duration.

Promote the value of self-care among consumers, healthcare professionals and stakeholders as part of global AMR containment efforts.



While policy frameworks and the high-level commitment of 2024 have laid the groundwork for addressing AMR, implementation requires tangible solutions that leverage all available resources. The use of NPAs represents an untapped opportunity to reduce unnecessary prescription antibiotic use, prevent infections and strengthen AMR stewardship at the community level.

## About GSCF

The Global Self-Care Federation is dedicated to a world where self-care increasingly contributes to better health and more sustainable healthcare systems. We represent associations and manufacturers in the self-care industry, working closely with our members and relevant stakeholder groups to ensure evidence-based self-care products and solutions are recognized as key contributors to health for individuals and systems worldwide.

TO FIND OUT MORE  
ABOUT GSCF CONTACT:

Emma Saïd, GSCF Policy Manager  
[esaid@selfcarefederation.org](mailto:esaid@selfcarefederation.org)



## Annex 1: Non-Prescription Antimicrobials in scope



### Antivirals

**Examples:** Acyclovir

**Role:** Treats localized viral infections like cold sores, reducing disease transmission without contributing to AMR.



### Antifungals

**Examples:** Clotrimazole, Terbinafine

**Role:** Manages surface-level fungal infections to prevent progression to severe conditions requiring systemic treatment.



### Antiseptics

**Examples:** Chlorhexidine, Benzoyl Peroxide

**Role:** Disinfects wounds and minor skin infections, reducing microbial load and preventing escalation.



### Topical Antibiotics for Infection Prevention

**Examples:** Bacitracin zinc, Neomycin sulfate, Polymyxin B sulfate

**Role:** Prevents infections in minor cuts, scrapes and burns.



### Antiparasitics

**Examples:** Permethrin (lice treatment), Albendazole (pinworms)

**Role:** Effectively treats parasitic conditions early, minimizing the need for advanced treatments.



### Soaps

**Examples:** Antibacterial soaps, regular hand soaps

**Role:** Essential for hand hygiene to break infection transmission chains and reduce antibiotic demand.



### Disinfectants

**Examples:** Alcohol-based hand sanitizers, personal care disinfectants

**Role:** Eliminates pathogens on surfaces and hands, preventing infections at the source.

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