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MEDIA STATEMENT

Over-the-counter NSAIDS a safe and effective remedy for pain and inflammation

The Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI) today reassured patients that non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicines (NSAIDs) continue to play an important role in short term pain relief for the majority of consumers.

The Deputy Executive Director of ASMI, Dr Deon Schoombie was responding to media reports quoting The Gut Foundation as raising questions about the use of NSAIDs by people with a history of stomach or kidney disorders or heart problems.

Dr Schoombie said that NSAIDs, such as ibuprofen and diclofenac, are available without a prescription at low doses for short-term use in self-limiting conditions. They are safe and effective for the temporary relief of pain and inflammation.

“NSAIDs are available as non-prescription medicines world-wide and have a long history of safe use. These products are safe when used as directed, but like any medicine they can cause problems when used incorrectly, or by people with certain conditions or taking specific medicines”, he said.

Over-the-counter (OTC) labels on NSAIDs provide warning statements, including that they not be taken by patients over the age of 65 or those with stomach, kidney or heart problems, without first talking to a health professional. The labels also advise that people who are taking other medications regularly for other conditions should first obtain the advice of their healthcare professional.

“NSAIDs available over-the-counter, without a prescription are all labelled with warning statements and dosage instructions regarding their purpose and appropriate use. It is important to read labels carefully, and to strictly follow all the directions and, if the pain or other symptoms persist, to consult a doctor or pharmacist,” Dr Schoombie said.

About ASMI: The Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI) is the peak industry body for the Australian self care industry representing consumer healthcare products including over-the-counter medicines and complementary medicines. ASMI’s mission is to promote better health through responsible self-care. This means ensuring that safe and effective self-care products are readily available to all Australians at a reasonable cost. ASMI works to encourage responsible use by consumers and an increasing role for cost-effective self-medication products as part of the broad national health strategy. www.asmi.com.au

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