

MEDIA STATEMENT

DATE: 9th May 2017

PAGB response to an observational study on the use of prescribed NSAIDs and potential increase in risk of heart attacks

An observational study, published in The BMJ, has suggested that prescribed non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), used for treating pain and inflammation, may be associated with an increased risk of a heart attack.

John Smith, PAGB Chief Executive, said: “This study analysed various healthcare databases where people had been *prescribed* high doses of NSAIDs to treat painful conditions such as arthritis. It does not take in to account any potentially influencing factors, nor does it prove cause and effect.

“NSAIDs that are available to buy over-the counter (OTC) are much lower doses than those prescribed. Prescribed NSAIDs are also typically used daily and for much longer durations, often to treat long-term conditions.

“People taking OTC NSAIDs should not be concerned by this research if they are taking the medicine occasionally for short periods and according to the on-pack instructions.

“The study also showed that after patients had taken their last prescribed dose of an NSAID, their risk of having a heart attack then decreased over time back to normal levels of risk, which indicates that the NSAIDs had no lasting effect on someone’s probability of suffering a heart attack.

“It is important for people with a history of heart disease or other long term conditions to speak to a pharmacist before taking any OTC medicine to check for any potential drug interactions or health concerns. OTC medicines should only be taken in

accordance with the on-pack instructions and patient information leaflet. Anyone who has concerns about taking a medicine should speak to a pharmacist for advice.”

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Notes to editors:

PAGB (Proprietary Association of Great Britain) is the UK trade association representing manufacturers of branded over-the-counter medicines, self care medical devices and food supplements.

For further information, please contact Pegasus: Lauren Jones or Amy Simmons
01273 712000 / PAGB@thisispegasus.co.uk