

# Ask, Assess, Advise explained

Be wise and **advise**

In the past two editions of *frontline*, we have focussed on the first two steps of Ask, Assess, Advise. This edition focuses on the 'advise' bubble, and how you can help your customers use their medicines safely and effectively.

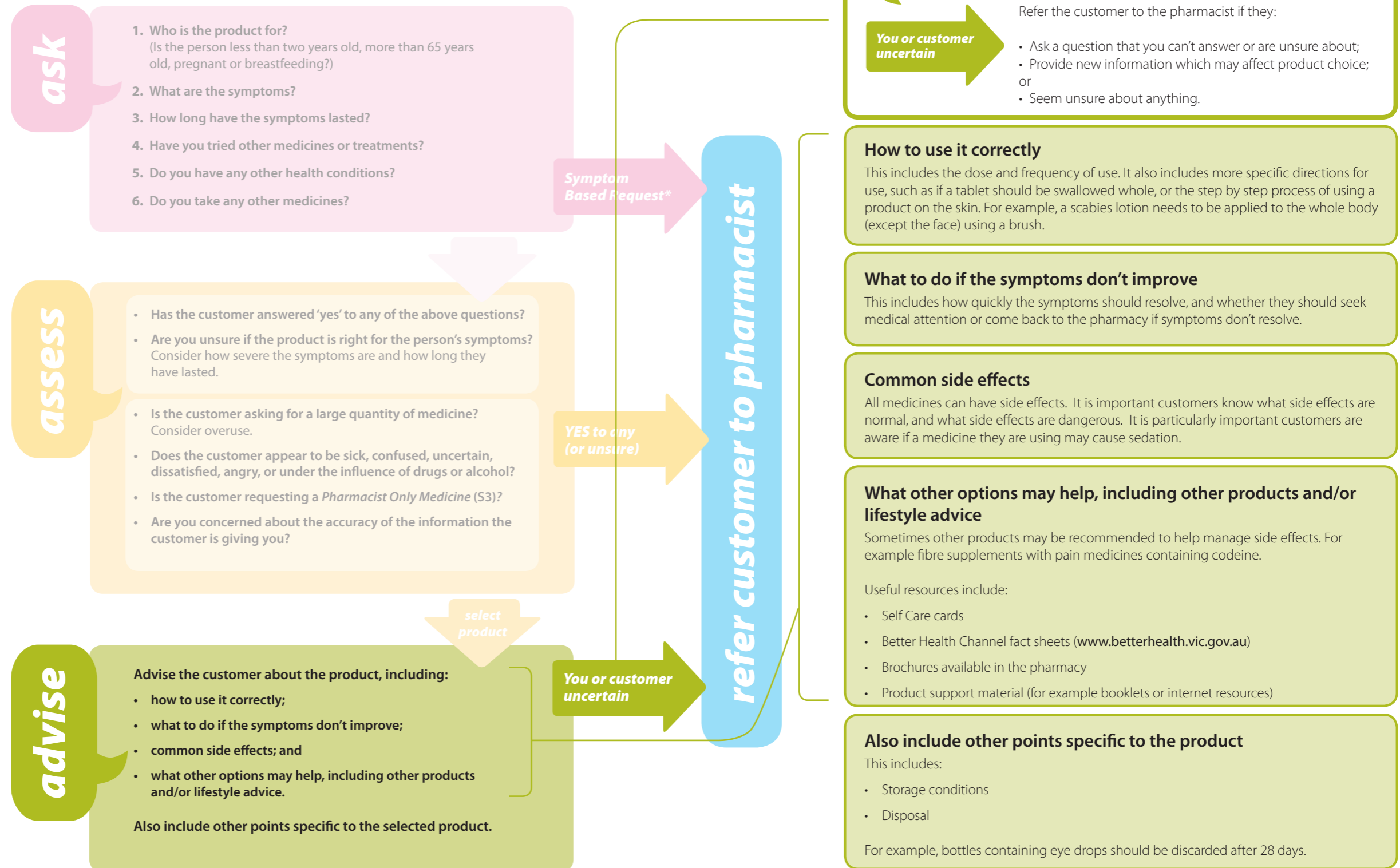
Helping customers with their health problems is your top priority in the pharmacy. In addition to helping customers with their health, knowledge and advice adds value to a product sale and builds trust with your customers.

The 'ask' and 'assess' bubbles are all about helping the customer select the right product. Once a product is selected, the 'advise' bubble is all about helping customers understand how to get the best results from the selected product. This means helping customers understand how to use products safely and effectively.

To make sure you provide the best advice every time, you should follow the points in the advise box in order. This helps you make sure you don't miss anything important. When you advise, it is best if you are familiar with the product. However, if you are new to pharmacy, you may use information on the product packaging to help you advise your customer. Whether you are new to pharmacy, or have worked in pharmacy for some time, if you or your customers are ever unsure about anything, you should refer them to the pharmacist.

Advising your customers about things they are familiar with can be frustrating for them. It is important to gauge body language and not unnecessarily repeat information if it is clear the customer is familiar with the information. However, some key points, such as risk of sedation, are important enough to be mentioned in all cases.

The boxes on the opposite page talk more about how to advise your customers. On the following two pages (6 and 7) you will find two examples of how to apply Ask, Assess, Advise to product requests for pain relief related medicines.



\* A Symptom Based Request is where a customer asks for a product which will assist with symptoms they describe without requesting a particular product.