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## MEDIA STATEMENT

### Paracetamol and asthma link remains unclear

The Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI) said today that the association between paracetamol exposure and the incidence of childhood asthma remains unclear, and that further, carefully-conducted research would be necessary to establish any causal link.

ASMI was responding to a publication in *Pediatrics*,<sup>1</sup> the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, by Dr John T McBride, as well as related media coverage on the association between paracetamol use and asthma.

ASMI Regulatory and Scientific Affairs Director, Steven Scarff said that while examination of this issue was important, Dr McBride's publication did not, in itself, shed new light on the association between paracetamol use and childhood asthma.

Mr Scarff noted that the authors of a recent Australian study<sup>2</sup> had concluded that paracetamol use in early life was not an independent risk factor for childhood asthma.

Paracetamol has been available for more than 50 years and the vast majority of adults and children experience no undesirable effects, when used as directed. It remains an effective and safe option for the treatment of pain and fever, and is the most commonly recommended over the counter analgesic/antipyretic for use during pregnancy and in children.

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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](http://www.asmi.com.au)

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<sup>1</sup> John T. McBride, The Association of Acetaminophen and Asthma Prevalence and Severity, *Pediatrics*, originally published online November 7, 2011, DOI: 10.1542/peds.2011-1106

<sup>2</sup> Lowe AJ, Carlin JB, Bennett CM, et al. Does frequent paracetamol exposure in the first two years of life increase risk of childhood asthma? *Respirology* 2008; 13: A36.