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## MEDIA STATEMENT

### ASMI response to study on ibuprofen use and potassium deficiency

The Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI) today urged caution in reacting to a new study suggesting a link between ibuprofen and potassium deficiency.<sup>i</sup> In particular, care should be taken to distinguish low-dose, short-term, over-the-counter (OTC) use from longer term use and misuse.

The study in *The Medical Journal of Australia* examines the effects of excessive ibuprofen ingestion in producing renal tubular acidosis (RTA), which can result in potassium deficiency. The study in question was based on the experience of four patients who were using up to 50 tablets per day.

ASMI Regulatory and Scientific Affairs Director, Steven Scarff said that the typical OTC dose of ibuprofen is 1200 mg per day, and that OTC ibuprofen should only be used for short periods of time.

“Anyone using ibuprofen at the doses recommended on the product labels should not be concerned by the study findings. Anyone using ibuprofen at higher doses or for long periods should only do so on the advice of a healthcare professional.

“As the study itself notes, RTA is a ‘complication of ibuprofen misuse’, and as such, will not impact those who follow the label instructions and use the product responsibly.

“As with any medicine, excessive use can be harmful. Ibuprofen has a long history of safe and effective use in Australia, when used according to the instructions,” Mr Scarff said.

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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>i</sup> Jennifer L Ng, David J R Morgan, Nelson K M Loh, Seng K Gan, Patrick L Coleman, Gregory S Y Ong and David Prentice; Life-threatening hypokalaemia associated with ibuprofen-induced renal tubular acidosis; *The Medical Journal of Australia*, 2011; 194 (6): 313-316