

FDA plans to ease OTC approvals for some prescription drugs

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This Oct. 14, 2015, file photo shows the Food and Drug Administration campus in Silver Spring, Md. The Food and Drug Administration is considering easing the process for drugmakers to get approval to sell some prescription medicines over the counter, a move to offer consumers convenience and lower prices. FDA Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb said Tuesday, July 17, 2018 that the agency has developed tentative guidelines for drugmakers to do so, while maintaining safety standards. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik, File)

The Food and Drug Administration wants to make it easier for some

common medicines to be sold without a prescription.

The agency proposed new guidelines Tuesday for drugmakers who want to switch prescription drugs to over the counter.

In a statement, FDA Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb said the agency is evaluating ways to make sure patients don't take an inappropriate over-the-counter drug. That could include adding information to the packaging label and offering mobile applications to help people decide if a drug is right for them.

Drugmakers would have to do studies showing those strategies allow consumers to safely pick a drug and use it without medical supervision.

Many widely used nonprescription drugs originally were only available by prescription, including allergy treatment Claritin and heartburn remedy Prilosec.

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