

Health and Social Care is committed to making information as accessible as possible and to promoting meaningful engagement. Requests for this leaflet in another format or language will be considered.

Is it a 'free' NHS service?

No, supplying medicine in an emergency is a private service not funded by the NHS. A **charge** will be made for the medicines supplied; this will depend on the cost of the medicine and the pharmacist's policy.

Visitors to the UK

If you are a visitor to the UK, you can get an emergency supply of medicine from a pharmacist:

- At your request, if a doctor or dentist* has prescribed the medicine for you before
- At the request of a doctor or dentist*
- If you have a prescription from a doctor or dentist*

*The doctor or dentist must be registered in a European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland. Pharmacists cannot supply medicines based on prescriptions issued from outside this area.

This arrangement does not cover controlled medicines or medicines that do not have a UK marketing authorisation.

Further information is available at the following websites:

Professional standards for doctors, nurses and pharmacists:

General Medical Council (GMC) Home Page

www.gmc-uk.org

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Home Page

www.nmc-uk.org

Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (PSNI) Home Page

www.psni.org.uk

Reporting Side Effects of Medicines

Yellow Card Scheme

www.yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk

Information on Medicines

British National Formulary – includes children (registration required)

www.bnf.org

Electronic Medicines Compendium

www.medicines.org.uk

Medicines for children – practical advice

www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk



Your Medicines
Your Responsibility



It is your responsibility to ensure that you always have a supply of your prescription medicines. You should always order your repeat prescriptions in good time.

What can I do if I run out of my medicines?

If you run out of your medicines outside normal GP surgery opening hours and need some urgently, there are a few ways to get an emergency supply.

If you already have a prescription and urgently need the medicines, try the following:

- If your local pharmacy is closed, check if there are other pharmacies in the area, some may be open late and on Sundays. See below for more information on how to find a pharmacy.
- If it is a public holiday, the nearest pharmacy may have displayed a notice that says which pharmacy in the area is open during the holiday period. Alternatively, check your local newspaper or the www.gpoutofhours.hscni.net website and select 'Services' and click on 'Pharmacy Out-of-Hours'.

Tip: If you use prescription medicines, always keep a record of your current prescription medicines as set out in your usual prescription form.

If you do not have a prescription, try the following:

- You may be able to get an emergency supply without a prescription from a pharmacy. See below for further information & charges.
- Contact your nearest GP Out-of-Hours Service for advice; they will assess the urgency of your request and may issue a prescription for a limited supply of medicines
- If you are away from home, you can register as a 'temporary resident' with a GP surgery in the area. The GP will need to see you face to face before they will issue a prescription.

How do I find out where my nearest medical and pharmacy services are?

- telephone directory
- local newspapers
- directory enquiries
- www.gpoutofhours.hscni.net website

How much can the pharmacist supply?

The pharmacist may provide an emergency supply of up to 30 days' treatment for most prescription medicines, with these exceptions:

- A limited range of permitted 'controlled medicines' e.g. painkillers containing codeine: up to 5 days' treatment
- Insulin, an ointment or cream or an asthma inhaler: the smallest pack size available
- The contraceptive pill: a full treatment cycle

What happens if I ask a pharmacist for an emergency supply of medicines?

Pharmacists are not permitted by law to 'lend' you a supply of a prescription medicine that you then 'pay back' from your next prescription. The arrangements for an emergency supply from a pharmacist are different to how you would normally obtain your prescription medicines.

You must have been prescribed the medicine before by a doctor, dentist or other prescriber registered in the UK.

The pharmacist:

- Will usually need to see you face-to-face
- Must agree that you need the medicine immediately
- Must be satisfied that you were prescribed the medicine before
- Will decide if they are able to supply the medicine and on how much to give you
- Is unable to supply certain controlled drugs e.g. morphine, temazepam
- Must make a record of all emergency supplies

Tip: Show the pharmacist your prescription medicines list and if possible, the empty box for the medicines you require.