

The repeat prescription request and authorisation process – patient information



What is a repeat prescription?

Some medicines may be required to be taken on an ongoing basis to help manage your long-term condition. This is a repeat prescription.

Usually, one- or two-months' supply can be issued on a prescription and be repeated over a timeframe agreed with you before you may need another appointment or medication review.

Some medicines require closer monitoring or blood tests between appointments to make sure the medicine or the dose is effective and safe for you.

Some medicines are not issued on repeat because they require more regular reviews. Examples include strong pain killers or sleeping tablets. Your prescribing healthcare professional will discuss this with you on an individual basis.

How do I request a repeat prescription?

Ways to request your repeat medication include:

1. **Via the NHS app or NHS website – this is the fastest route as it goes straight to the practice inbox**
2. **Online via our website**
3. **In person – use the right-hand side of your previous prescription, or request forms are usually available in reception.**

Usually, requests **cannot** be taken over the telephone (to avoid errors being made).

We may ask you to nominate a preferred pharmacy for your prescription to be sent to electronically. This is known as your 'nominated community pharmacy'. If you are registered at a dispensing practice, the prescription will be printed in the dispensary.

How long will it take for my prescription request to be processed?

We aim to process your prescription request within two working days.

This is due to the large number of requests we receive daily, and because there are several steps involved in ensuring the prescription request is safe to be authorised.

The prescription is then usually sent electronically to your chosen pharmacy or can be printed and collected.

There is the option to track your prescription request using the NHS app or [website](#).

Please be aware at particularly busy times of year, for example, around bank holidays, you will need to order earlier than usual to receive your prescription on time.

There may be delays from time to time, but we always do our best to ensure you receive your medicines safely and on time.

How do repeat prescriptions work?



Urgent requests

Please try not to run out of your medicines. When you are running low, e.g., have two weeks' supply remaining, please request the next prescription.

If you accidentally run low or run out, we will try to process your request as quickly as possible, but please remember that the request process must be carried out thoroughly and safely and that GP practice teams are extremely busy.

Emergency supply requests for medicine can be requested from NHS 111 or 111 Online in an urgent situation. The pharmacy will check the GP record/National Care Record to ensure that they are not making duplicate supplies to ensure your safety and reduce waste.

What is a medication review and a structured medication review?

A medication review is usually arranged annually, sometimes more frequently, depending on the medication or condition being treated. A structured medication review is a more in-depth discussion between you and a GP or pharmacist. It is an opportunity to understand how you are managing with your medicines and for you to share any worries or concerns you may have. [See the Health Innovation Network's helpful animation.](#)

Medication reviews are important, even if you have been taking the same medication for a very long time. The medication review enables you to raise any questions or concerns you have with your prescriber. It is the opportunity to discuss the benefits and any unwanted effects of your medicines to ensure you are getting the best possible treatment.

Some medicines require tests to be carried out **before** your medicines can be safely re-authorized to you. For example, blood tests or blood pressure checks. If you have been asked to have any regular tests or monitoring, please book in for this **before** your medication review.

Messages on your prescriptions

Sometimes we will communicate with you via your prescription. For example, we may give you a reminder about forthcoming blood tests.

When you collect your prescription, the pharmacy will mention this. You can always ask your pharmacist to check for any messages that may have been sent with your prescription.

How to avoid unnecessary medicines waste

Please do not over order your medication. Once issued by your pharmacy or dispensary, medication cannot be reused and will always be destroyed when returned to the pharmacy.

If we notice you are ordering medicines too frequently, we may advise that you have a medication review and stop further prescriptions until we have spoken to you.

See the NHS Dorset website for [more information on medicines waste](#).

IMPORTANT

All prescription-only medicines have been carefully assessed for their safety before they were licensed to be prescribed. Your prescriber and your pharmacy team will check if the medicines prescribed are safe for you. It is NOT safe to share your prescription-only medicines with friends, family members or colleagues.

DO NOT SHARE your prescription medicine(s). According to the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulation Authority, anyone who shares their prescription medicines, even with a family member, is breaking the law.

The Medicines Act specifies that prescription drugs should only be supplied to the individual for whom they were prescribed.