



Your medicines while
you're in hospital



At Epic Pharmacy, we know coming to hospital can be stressful. We're here to make sure you not only receive the right medicines, but to support your health and wellbeing.

That's why we've put together this brochure to help you know what to bring along to hospital, what out-of-pocket expenses you might be responsible for and what will happen when you go home.

You can help hospital staff by letting them know what medicines you're currently taking and if there have been any recent changes. This ensures the risk of medicine interactions is minimised and you get the greatest benefit out of the medicines you're taking.

Do I need to organise anything before I come to hospital?

Before you come to hospital, ask your local pharmacy or doctor to give you an updated medication list. On this list, make sure all medicines are included. This includes any medicines you buy from health food shops, supermarkets and over-the-counter from your pharmacy. All of these may cause problems with medicines commonly prescribed in hospital, so it's important that they're listed.

It is also important your list includes any medicines you're allergic or have had a reaction to and what the reaction was.

If you're having surgery, you might need to stop taking some of your medicines before you're admitted. Your doctor will let you know if this is the case. Please don't stop taking any medicines without consulting your doctor first.

What should I bring with me to hospital?

There are a number of things we need you to bring along for your treatment. Here's a checklist you can use when you're packing to make remembering everything easier.

Checklist

- Medicare card
- Concession, pension or DVA card if applicable
- Safety net entitlement card if applicable
- A list of current prescriptions from your local pharmacy if applicable
- All of your current medicines, making sure they're left in their original packaging
- Current prescriptions so we can fill any repeats needed during your stay

If you have questions about your medicines during your treatment, feel free to speak with us.

When you're admitted, please let our pharmacy know if you are close to the limit to receive a Safety Net subsidy, and bring the list of current prescriptions with you. If this occurs while you're receiving treatment, we'll issue your entitlement card and make sure that the rest of your medications are charged at the subsidised rate.

If you'd like to update your local pharmacy about your Safety Net total, please ask us for a list of all your prescriptions at the time you're preparing to leave hospital. As this list can be used to make a Medicare claim against your Safety Net, you are required to settle your pharmacy account before you receive it.

What happens to my medicines while I'm in hospital?

When you arrive at hospital, you'll be asked what medicines you use regularly and what you use occasionally. Please bring your medicines with you, but make sure they're in the original bottle or box so nursing staff can check they're giving you the right medicines and that they're within their expiry date. While you're in hospital, you will be asked to give your medicines to the nursing staff so they can be stored safely and securely.

It's important you don't take any medicines while you're in hospital without checking with the doctor or nurse looking after you, including any pain relief or sleeping tablets. This is so we can ensure you aren't prescribed any medicines that may cause adverse reactions while you're in hospital.

If you're having an operation, the doctor will likely prescribe some new medicines, such as pain relief. Your doctor can discuss changes to medicines with you or a carer, or one of our pharmacists will be happy to speak with you.

Will I be out-of-pocket for my medicines?

Private health insurance, DVA or workers' compensation patients

If you are a privately insured, DVA or workers' compensation patient, you might have some out-of-pocket expenses at the end of your stay.

This will depend on your level of cover and the hospital's agreement with your health fund. The medicines given to you when you go home may not be subsidised. If this is the case, you may be asked to pay for these items before you leave the hospital.

Uninsured patients

If you don't have private health insurance, you'll need to pay for all out-of-pocket costs before you leave the hospital.

How much will my medicines cost?

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme [PBS] gives a government subsidy for many medicines. If you have a valid Medicare Card, you'll receive the subsidy for PBS eligible medication during your stay. Medicines not covered by the PBS will be charged at the full cost. If you don't have a Medicare Card, then your medicines will also be charged at the full cost.

To find out the cost of your medicines at any stage during your hospital stay, please talk to one of our pharmacy staff.

What happens when I'm ready to go home?

When you go home, any of the medicines that you brought to hospital with you will be returned, along with any additional or new medicines prescribed. If any of your medicines have been stopped, you will be given the option to take them home, or we can safely dispose of them for you.



You'll be given information leaflets about any new medicines. If you'd like to talk to one of our pharmacists about your medicines before you leave the hospital, please let nursing staff know as soon as possible.

When you're getting ready to leave hospital, one of our pharmacists may visit to make sure you understand how to take your medicines when you arrive home. They will talk to you about:

- The medicines you're now taking and the dosages of each
- The medicines you've stopped taking
- Any medicines that you only need to take for a few days
- Any side-effects you may experience
- If your medicines will interfere with any other medicines
- If your medicines restrict driving, food or alcohol intake

It's important you understand how to take your new medicines before you return home to ensure you use them correctly and maintain your health. If you have questions about your medicines when you get home, you can talk to your local pharmacist, or phone Epic Pharmacy for assistance.

If you have specific medicines at home and don't need additional doses supplied, please make sure you ask the nurse to return them to the pharmacy before you leave. Unfortunately, once medicines have been removed from the hospital we are unable to accept their return. This ensures the integrity of our medicines and safety of all patients.

Should I update my doctor and local pharmacist?

If there have been any changes to your medicines while you've been in hospital, it's important that you update your doctor and local pharmacist.

