

Changes to your prescription length

What's changing and why

Longer prescriptions for stable, long-term conditions.

From 1 February, some people with stable, long-term health conditions will be able to get prescriptions that last up to 12 months.

Your prescriber will work with you to decide if a 12-month prescription is right for you and your health needs.

Currently

Most prescriptions are for up to three months (six months for oral contraceptives).

Soon

Eligible people may receive prescriptions for up to 12 months. Most medicines are dispensed at three monthly intervals and all repeats must be collected from the same pharmacy.

Why is this changing?

To make it easier and cheaper for people to get the medicines they need.

How will this affect you?

What health conditions will be eligible for 12-month prescriptions?

- Your doctor or prescriber will work with you to understand your health needs before deciding if a longer prescription is right for you.
- 12-month prescriptions are more likely to be suitable for people with stable, long-term health conditions.
- The rules for controlled drugs like strong pain relievers and ADHD medicines are not changing.

Is it safe?

- Yes. Your prescriber (your doctor, nurse practitioner, or pharmacist prescriber) will work with you to decide if a 12-month prescription is safe and appropriate for you.
- Not everyone will get a 12-month prescription. It depends on your individual health needs.
- You'll still stay connected with your healthcare team.

How will payments work?

- You'll continue to only pay one prescription co-payment per prescription item, when you collect your first supply from the pharmacy.

- There are no repeat prescription fees for the same prescription.
- People who are already exempt from the prescription fee (e.g. children under 14 years, community Services Card holders and their dependents and seniors aged 65 years and over) will remain exempt.

Key points to remember

- **Your safety comes first:** Your doctor will talk with you about your health before deciding how long your prescription should last.
- **You'll still collect your medicines at the same intervals. Only three months of medicines can be collected at any one time.**
- **No extra cost:** You pay the prescription co-payments only once per prescription.
- **More convenience:** Fewer trips to the doctor or other prescribers for repeat prescriptions.

Find out more at
info.health.nz/Prescriptions