

## Your Medicines During Treatment – Epic Pharmacy

At Epic Pharmacy, we know cancer treatment 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 your treatment, 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 will help minimise the risk of medicine interactions and ensure you get the greatest benefit out of the medicines you're taking.

### Do I need to organise anything before I come for treatment?

Before treatment, 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, 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.

You may need to stop taking some of your medicines before starting treatment. Your doctor will let you know if this is the case. Please don't stop taking any medicines without consulting with your doctor first.

### What should I bring to my treatment?

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

- 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
- Any medicines your doctor has asked you to bring along, making sure they're in their original packaging
- Current prescriptions so we can fill any repeats needed

When you arrive, 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 before you finish treatment. 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.

## Will the costs of my medicines be subsidised?

If you have a valid Medicare Card, you'll receive the subsidy for PBS eligible medicines during your treatment. 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.

In the majority of cases, the cost of cancer medicines is subsidised. However, this can depend on your treatment, as some specialised medicines do have large out-of-pocket fees. If this is the case, one of our pharmacists will discuss your medicines and any associated costs with you before you begin treatment. For large out of pocket fees, you'll need to pay for these items before your treatment begins.

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

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

### Private health insurance and DVA patients

If you have private health insurance, or are a DVA patient, you might have some out-of-pocket expenses. This will depend on your level of cover with your health fund.

The medicines given to you when you go home are usually not subsidised. If this is the case, you may be asked to pay for these items before you leave.

### Uninsured patients

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

## What happens when my treatment finishes?

### Medication counselling

During your treatment, 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 leaving.

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.

## Contact

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