

A Guide to 28-Day Prescribing

What is the reason for 28-day prescribing?

28-day prescribing is recognised by the NHS as making the best possible balance between patient convenience, good medical practice, and minimal medicine wastage.

What does 28-day prescribing mean for you?

When you are being prescribed a repeat medicine, your doctor prescribes enough of each medicine to last you for 28 days. For example, if you are taking 2 tablets a day you will receive 56 tablets, 3 tablets a day 84 tablets, 4 tablets a day 112 tablets etc.

Are there any exceptions?

A few medicines are unsuitable for 28-day prescribing. Examples include some inhalers, insulin vials, oral contraceptives, and hormone replacement therapy.

Weekly (7 day) prescribing

Decisions to prescribe to a shorter interval than 28 days may be made due to clinical or safety reasons. When a new medicine is prescribed, it might be prescribed for 7 or 14 days to check that it works or if there are any unwanted effects.

28-day prescribing is appropriate for patients using a multiple compartment compliance aid unless there is a clinical or safety reason for weekly (7 day) prescribing.

What are the benefits of 28-day prescribing?

- You will always start (and finish) each medicine on the same day of the week so will reduce the likelihood of you running out of one of your medicines.
- It will be easier for your doctor to review all of the repeat medicines you are taking and to see if you might be having problems with any of your medicines.
- Companies manufacture many medicines in 28-day 'calendar packs' that show the day of the week on the packaging. This packaging allows you to check that you have taken your medication each day. These packs also have patient information leaflets inside .
- 28-day prescribing reduces the amount of medicine which is wasted when medicines are stopped or changed by doctors.

What about cost?

The majority of patients collecting repeat prescriptions do not pay prescription charges.

If you pay prescription charges a Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC) will save you money if you have more than 3 prescription items in 3 months or more than 11 prescription items in 12 months.

More details can be found on the NHS Website at <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions-and-pharmacies/save-money-with-a-prescription-prepayment-certificate-ppc/>

Ordering your Repeat Prescriptions

The **NHS electronic Repeat Dispensing service** provides a convenient method of collecting your medicines direct from the pharmacy without the need to order from your GP surgery every month.

If you are interested in this service, and to enquire if it is suitable for you, please ask at your pharmacy or GP practice reception.

Repeat prescriptions can also be ordered via the **NHS App** or **NHS website**. Visit <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/> for more information or speak to your GP practice.

What about holidays and travelling abroad?

You may receive prescriptions to cover your time abroad. This is at the discretion of the surgery but must be for no longer than three months.

If you plan to travel abroad with medicines, it is important that you check the rules for the country you're going to before you travel. Visit

<https://www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-and-travel> or <https://www.gov.uk/take-medicine-in-or-out-uk> for more information.

Summary

- 28-day prescribing has important benefits for patients.
- All medicines should last for the same number of days. If you are running out of some items or have too much of some medication, please tell the GP Practice.
- **Do not stockpile medicines at home; only order items that you need.**
- Return unwanted medication to your local pharmacy for safe disposal.

Complaints, Enquiries and Comments about 28-Day Prescribing

If you wish to make a complaint about 28-day prescribing or have any comments on the content of this guide, then please contact our Patient Experience Team. Complaints, enquiries and comments can be submitted in writing, email, telephone or in person by appointment only.

Patient Experience Team:

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