



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™

Helping Hand™

Health Education for Patients and Families

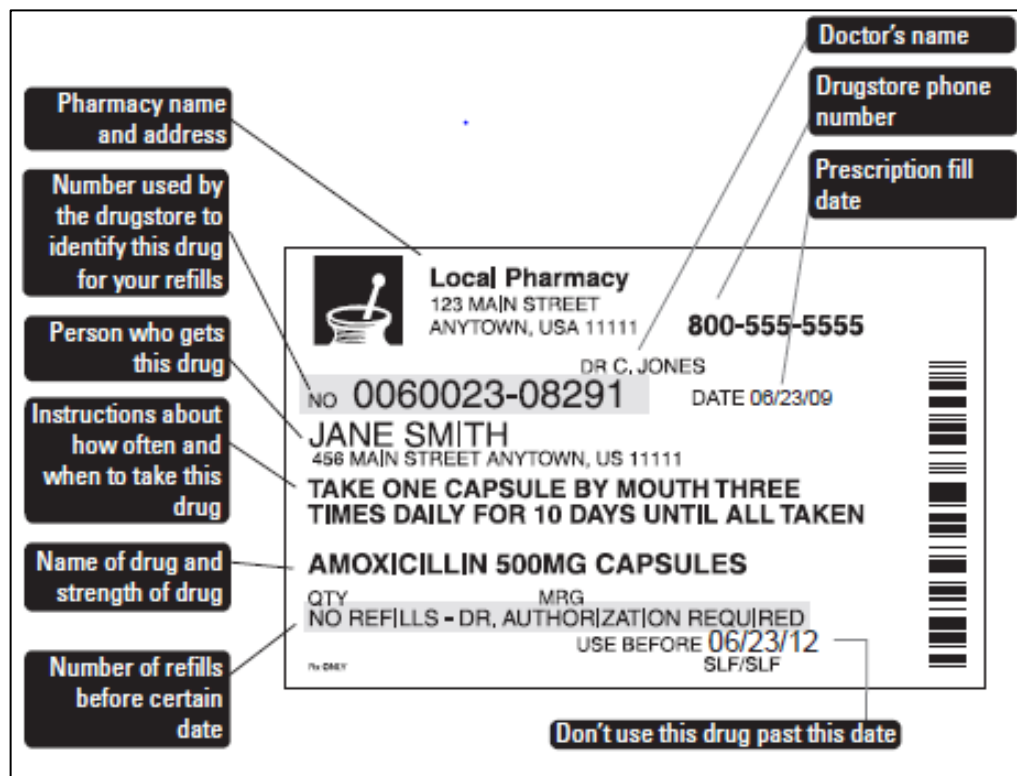
Prescription Medicines

To take care of your child's health, you need to know how to fill prescriptions. Most prescriptions for medicines may be filled at a local pharmacy. You may also get them from a mail order pharmacy, if your insurance allows. Your prescription insurance will use a specific mail order pharmacy.

Filling a prescription for medicine

- When you go to your child's doctor, bring the name and contact information for the pharmacy that you use.
- The doctor may give you a prescription for a 30-day or 90-day supply of the medicine.
- It is common for the doctor to send prescriptions electronically to your local or mail order pharmacy.
- If the prescription cannot be sent electronically to your mail order pharmacy, you will often need to fill out a special insurance form to send along with a written prescription.
- Sometimes your local pharmacy can fill a prescription for 90 days instead of using a mail order pharmacy.
- When you go to the pharmacy, always take your prescription insurance card with you.
- A generic medicine may be given to you. Generic drugs have the same active ingredients as brand name drugs. They work the same way in the body but generic drugs will cost you less. Not all medicines have a generic form.
- Some insurance companies only cover certain brands or types of medicines. If a medicine is not covered, the pharmacy may call your child's doctor to change the medicine.

- The pharmacy may ask you to pay for part of any prescription each time you fill it. This is called a “co-pay.”
- If your insurance will not pay for a certain medicine and there is no substitute, your doctor can help connect you to a program to help pay for it.
- When you get the prescription, read the label and know the different parts. Check to see if you have received the right medicine and dose for your child (Picture 1).



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health

Picture 1 Sample of a prescription drug label. (Not all labels look like this.)

- Your child should not stop taking a medicine or change the amount taken without talking to his or her doctor first.
- If you notice your child has any side effects while taking a medicine, call his doctor or pharmacist right away.

Getting a prescription refilled

- If your child will be taking the same medicine for many months, the doctor may write the prescription for refills every 30 or 90 days. This allows you to get more medicine without asking the doctor to write a new prescription each time.
- Check the prescription label to see how many refills there are (Picture 1).
- If pre-arranged, your local or mail order pharmacy can refill your child's medicine automatically. The mail order pharmacy will send it to your home; the local pharmacy will call you when it is ready for pick up. If you do not set up automatic refills, you will have to contact the pharmacy yourself, in advance, to get the medicine refilled.
- Automatic refills are given to you until there are no more allowed by the prescription.
- Try to refill a prescription at least 5 days before running out.
- If the label says NO REFILLS, plan ahead. Call your child's doctor to write a new prescription as soon as you begin using the last refill. Tell the doctor where you want the prescription sent.
 - Allow 7 days to get a prescription renewed. That way, there is enough time to pick it up, have it mailed to you, or have it sent electronically to the pharmacy before the medicine runs out.
 - The doctor may request that you schedule an appointment for your child before renewing any medicine.
- To stop getting a medicine by mail order, call the company or go to their website to make the change.

Prior authorization for prescriptions

- The doctor may need to call the insurance company to help get a medicine approved (covered or paid for). This is called "prior authorization."
- An insurance company may approve certain medicines for a specific amount of time. After that time has passed, your child's doctor may need to ask for a new prior authorization for you to get more.
- For prescriptions that need prior authorization to refill, call your child's doctor 7 days before the medicine runs out.

Filling a prescription for a “controlled” medicine

The federal government regulates how often certain medicines can be prescribed. These drugs are “controlled” medicines. Some can cause harm or addiction if not taken properly. People with chronic conditions like epilepsy or chronic pain, or who have a behavioral health diagnosis like ADHD, might need to take controlled medicines.

- To get refills on certain controlled medicines, you may need a written prescription each time.
- Pharmacies cannot refill controlled substances early. Your child must use up the medicine first before the pharmacy can fill the prescription again.

How to transfer a prescription from one pharmacy to another

- If you need to change pharmacies, you do not need to call the old pharmacy. The new pharmacy can do this for you.
- Call or go to the new pharmacy to ask for the transfer. Take your child’s medicine bottle with you. The label will have all of the information that the new pharmacy needs.

Other helpful tips

- A prescription is usually valid for one year after the date that it is written.
- Always let the doctor and pharmacist know what other medicines your child takes. Carry a list of them with you, including vitamins, over-the-counter, and herbal medicines.
- Make sure the pharmacy has the medicine. They will work with you or your provider to get it or one similar for your child.
- If you lose or spill your child’s medicine, let the pharmacy know. The pharmacist will work with you and your doctor to help you get more medicine.
- If the doctor changes the dose of the medicine and gives you a new prescription, make sure the pharmacy sees the change. Check the medicine label to be sure that you received the new, correct dose.
- You should only order medicines from a pharmacy approved by your insurance company or health care provider. Buying online from an unknown source or from other countries is dangerous to do and not allowed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).