

# Run out of your medicines?

**Community pharmacies are your first call  
for emergency prescriptions**



## Your first call for emergency prescriptions

If you run out of a prescribed medicine outside your GPs opening hours and need medication urgently, **community pharmacies** can get you an emergency supply quickly, even if you're

away from home. Please avoid using A&E to obtain medicines that you have run out of. Our A&E departments are intended for life threatening emergencies only.

### Visiting your community pharmacy

It's a good idea to take an old repeat prescription or the medicine's packaging with you, if you have it. The pharmacist will need to discuss:

- whether you need the medicine immediately - there are some medicines where it is safe to miss doses in the short-term
- who previously prescribed the medicine - to make sure they're a trusted source
- details of the medicine and what dose you take - to make sure that it is appropriate for you.

### What can they provide?

The pharmacist will need to know the answers to these questions before they can dispense an emergency supply of your medicines without a prescription.

Your pharmacist may only be able to supply you with a small quantity of medicines to last until you can get a

prescription from your GP surgery.

Only a limited range of 'controlled drugs' can be prescribed in an emergency, such as those for epilepsy (phenobarbital). Many commonly used controlled medicines such as morphine or diamorphine cannot

be supplied without a prescription by a pharmacist in an emergency. Even if the pharmacist is unable to give you an emergency supply of a medicine, they will advise you on how to obtain any

essential medical care you may need. If this means obtaining a prescription, the pharmacist will advise you how to contact an out of hours GP through NHS 111.

**You can search for your nearest pharmacy at:**

**[bnssg.nhs.uk/health-services/pharmacies](https://bnssg.nhs.uk/health-services/pharmacies)**

## How much will this cost me?

You won't be charged extra for receiving your emergency prescription. Instead, you'll pay your usual prescription costs. If you receive your

prescriptions free of charge through an exemption, you will receive your emergency prescription for free.

## Repeat prescriptions

You should order your regular repeat prescription 7 days in advance of when you need them, to give your GP practice and pharmacy time to issue prescriptions and dispense your medicines safely, and so that you don't run out.

Remember to only ask for what you need to ensure that medicines are not wasted.



## Over the counter

If you need a non-prescription medicine, such as paracetamol or an antacid, the pharmacy will advise you that you can buy this over the counter. Additionally, other shops

such as supermarkets may stock a basic range of over-the-counter medicines. They also may have longer opening hours than high-street pharmacies.

## Pharmacy First

In addition to supplying your emergency prescriptions, you should visit your 'pharmacy first' for minor illnesses like coughs and colds. A fifth of all GP appointments are taken up by minor illnesses that could be better dealt with in other settings.

professional, expert advice on the self-care of such common conditions and can recommend over the counter medicines that can help, if needed. If your condition needs the attention of a GP or another healthcare professional, the pharmacist will advise appropriately.

Pharmacists can give you

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