

Pharmacy 101 The Basics

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Generics versus Brand Rx

What is the difference between generic and brand name drugs, and how does it effect my benefits?

- When a drug company develops a new drug, they're the only ones allowed to make it and sell it for a while under their "brand name." At some point, other companies are allowed to start making "generic" versions of it. These versions have the same active ingredients and quality standards, but cost less.

Are generic medications as safe as effective as brand name drugs? How can I request a generic medication?

- Yes. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will not approve a generic drug unless it's A-rated ("therapeutically equivalent"). It must be identical to the brand-name version — same active ingredients, dosage and strength and medical effect.

Your physician and pharmacist are the best sources of information about generic medications. Simply ask one of them if your prescription can be substituted with an equivalent generic medication.



Formulary - What is A Medication List

A medication list (sometimes called a formulary) is a list of prescription medications approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Our drug lists are made up of brand name and generic drugs that have been reviewed through our Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) process. This group meets regularly to review new and existing drugs and choose medications based on safety, effectiveness and value.

What is my drug is not in a medication list?

- Our medication list (sometimes called a formulary) allows you and your doctor to choose from a wide variety of prescription drugs. You can also talk to your doctor about making a request to Express Scripts for an exception review of a drug not on the medication list.

Note, should you require assistance in this process, please contact the dedicated customer service number on the back of your card for assistance.



Where To Get Your Prescription Drugs

It's simple. You choose what works best for you to get the medicines you need, when you need them.

- **Retail Pharmacy:** Most people use a local drugstore or pharmacy in a retail store to fill a prescription.
- **Home delivery pharmacy:** Some people use the home delivery pharmacy for prescriptions they have to take for a long time. Pharmacists call these drugs maintenance medications since they help maintain health. Using the home delivery pharmacy for these drugs may cost less. It can also be a more convenient option. Depending on your benefit plan, you can get up to a 90-day supply sent to your home.
- **Specialty pharmacy:** A specialty pharmacy provides medicine for people with chronic health conditions. Specialty drugs come in different forms like pills or liquids. And some need to be injected, inhaled or infused.

Note, For the first 90 days exclusive specialty benefit should allow 2 retail fills on specialty drugs at retail pharmacy/3rd fill at Accredo. Covers up to a 30 day supply (retail pharmacy and home delivery program)



Here are other items to note for your pharmacy benefit:

- The pharmacy may substitute a generic for a brand-name drug.
- If your current prescription medication is not a generic, call your doctor and ask if it's appropriate for you to switch to a lower cost generic drug. The decision is up to you and your doctor.
- Some drugs require our approval before the pharmacy can fill the prescription. This is called prior authorization. Usually, the pharmacist can talk to us for approval, or the pharmacist may need to contact the doctor who prescribed the drug.
- For some drugs, you may need to try a different drug that's just as effective instead. Trying drugs in a step-by-step way is called step therapy. Step therapy helps you and your doctor choose drugs that are safe, affordable and right for you.
- Taking too much medicine or using it too often is dangerous and costly. There are some medications the plan may limit how much of an medicine you can get each month. For example, a drug may have a limit of 30 pills for 30 days. This is called a quantity limit.



Rx Copays – All Plans

Copay Structure:	Retail	Mail
Tier 1 (Typically Generics)	\$10	\$20
Tier 2 (Typically/Preferred/Brand)	\$20	\$40
Tier 3 (Typically Non-Preferred)	\$40	\$80
Tier 4 (Typically Specialty Drugs)	Applicable retail drug tier copay applies (max 30 day supply)	



Customer Support

City of Los Angeles Contact Numbers

Have a question? Need to talk to someone? Here are your City of Los Angeles contact numbers:

What are you looking for?

Member Customer Service Monday - Friday 8am-8pm (medical & pharmacy)

Vivity: 1-844-348-6110

Narrow and Full HMOs: 1-844-348-6111

PPO (Anthem Health Guide): 1-833-597-2362

Member Advocate - Drop-In Appointments in City Hall, Employee Benefits Division, 200 N Spring Street, Room 867, 8am to 4pm, Monday to Friday

Condition Care - Assistance with managing an ongoing health condition (Asthma, Diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Heart Failure & Coronary Artery Disease) 1-800-522-5560

Behavioral Health Resource (special resource for behavioral health assistance): **1-844-792-5141**

24/7 Nurseline: **1-800-337-4770**

Future Moms: **1-866-664-5404**

City of Los Angeles Benefits Website <http://keepinglawell.com/>

Customer Support



Member Customer Service

Vivity: (844) 348-6110, Narrow & Full:
(844) 348-6111, PPO: (833) 597-2362

Resources & Tools



Find a Doctor, Hospital or
Urgent Care



Find Forms



Estimate Your Cost



Questions?



Kaiser Permanente Pharmacy Program

Marisol Garrido, Engagement Specialist

Kaiser Permanente HealthConnect® enhances prescription safety



E-prescriptions minimize mistakes or errors due to illegible or incomplete information



Electronic medical records make it easier for caregivers to monitor refills, get drug interaction alerts, and track medication compliance



Bar-code scanning helps ensure that patients get prescribed medications in appropriate doses

How we evaluate prescription drugs

- **Track** new drug approvals by the Food and Drug Administration
- **Analyze** published drug literature, unpublished studies, and comparative prices of existing therapies
- **Study** drugs and patient outcomes using KP HealthConnect



Our formulary: evidence-based

- Formulary **decided by doctors** based on analyzing clinical research and pharmacist recommendations and expertise
- Formulary **compliance rate of 95 percent** in California
- Often, there are many choices of treatment for a particular condition.
- Physicians use the Formulary (not drug reps) as a guide to appropriate drug therapy.
- Objectively evaluates and selects the right drugs to best meet the needs of our members and doctors.

Generic Medications at Kaiser Permanente

- About 99% of the drugs we dispense are generic when a generic is available
- On average, generic medications are 30% to 95% less expensive than brand name drugs while providing the same quality outcomes
- We have better generic prescribing rates than the marketplace because we're integrated
- Must be manufactured to the same high quality standards as the brand product
- Competitive prices on a select group of generic medications.
- All of these generic drugs treat serious chronic conditions, such as asthma, hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, and depression.
- These reduced member rates apply only to specific fixed quantities.
 - \$7 for 30-day supply
 - \$9 for 60-day supply
 - \$11 for 90-day supply

Your Prescription Drug Coverage:

Most generic items at a Plan Pharmacy \$10 for up to a 30-day supply

Most brand-name items at a Plan Pharmacy \$20 for up to a 30-day supply

Most specialty items at a Plan Pharmacy \$20 for up to a 30-day supply

What makes it a specialty drug?

- Recently, several new high cost drugs have been released to help patients with complex conditions.
- Some of these drugs are called "specialty" drugs.
- Currently, there is no universal definition of a specialty drug. Here are some general characteristics that this category shares
- Treats rare or complex conditions such as multiple sclerosis, hepatitis C, or cancer.

Pharmacy Mail Order Services

- ✓ FREE service - No extra mailing cost
- ✓ Prescriptions are usually delivered in 7-10 business days
- ✓ Save Time and Money
- ✓ No more driving to the pharmacy
- ✓ No more standing in line

3 Easy Ways to Use Mail Order

1. **Order refills online**, 24 hours a day
Visit www.kp.org
2. **Call toll free:** 1-888-218-6245
Or the number at the top of your prescription label
3. **Use a Mail Order form**
Available at Kaiser Permanente pharmacies