

BEING A HOARDER IS OUT OF ORDER.



What to expect from
your medicines:

A GUIDE FOR PATIENTS



ORDER
WHAT
YOU NEED



This leaflet will help you get the most out of your medicines and help you access the support you need.



What to expect from your GP when prescribed medicines

Your GP will offer you medicines based on the best available evidence.

It is important that you are clear on the instructions for taking medicines. Ask your GP if you are not sure of anything they have said, including when or how often you should take any medicine.

You should expect to be seen regularly by your GP to review your medicines and the condition you are taking them for. How frequently you are reviewed will depend on your medical condition. Your GP will discuss this with you.

Your GP should check how you are getting on with your medicines and may discuss issues such as:

- How easy it is for you to take the medicine on a regular basis?
- How well it is working?
- Possible side-effects from the medicine and what can be done about this?

How to order your prescriptions

From 1 November 2016 onwards, your GP practice will only accept repeat prescription requests from you or your carer (apart from in exceptional circumstances by arrangement).

If your medicine is currently ordered for you by your pharmacy or a dispensing company, you will now need to order it yourself directly from your GP practice in the following ways:

- Patient Access – This new, FREE website and app allows you to manage your medicine requests on your smartphone or on your computer.
- Handing in the white tear off part of your prescription, which is normally received when you receive your medication from the pharmacy. Only individual items that are ticked will be issued in this way.
- A request slip which is located in your practice reception
- Fax (this will vary for each practice)

If you or your carer already orders repeat prescriptions from your GP practice, you can continue to do this and will not be affected. If you have your prescription collected from your GP practice and delivered to your door by your pharmacy or dispensing company, this will still happen.

Patient Access

Patient Access is a free, secure way for you to send repeat medication requests online or using an app. It allows you to view the items on your repeat prescription record and order them at the click of a mouse or a tap on your smartphone. You can then view the progress of your request and be able to see when it has been dealt with. You can also look back at previous requests that you have made.

To download the app, search 'patient access' in your app store or visit <https://patient.emisaccess.co.uk>



What to expect from your pharmacist when you are given medicines

Your pharmacist is a highly qualified expert in medicines. They should offer you advice on how best to take your medication. Most pharmacists are able to see you without an appointment and a number of pharmacies in West Lancashire have long opening hours and are even open during weekends and bank holidays.

If you have any questions about your medicines please ask your pharmacist. There are two main services offered to support you if you take medicines regularly. These are the Medicines Use Review and the New Medicines Service. All pharmacies have a consultation room if you need to speak to the pharmacist in private.

Medicines Use Review

A Medicines Use Review is a free NHS service offered through your community pharmacist to focus on how you are getting on with your medicines. It simply involves a meeting between you and your pharmacist. This service will:

- Help you to find out more about the medicines you are taking
- Highlight any problems you are having with your medicines
- Improve the effectiveness of your medicines. There may be easier ways to take them, or you may find you need fewer medicines than before
- Get better value for the NHS – making sure that your medicines are right for you and prevents unnecessary waste

The pharmacist you meet will have questions to ask you and may suggest changes to your medicines. You may have concerns or questions that you want to ask. You can ask anything at all about your medicines.

Remember you can ask questions at any time, but a review will give you both more time to concentrate on you and your medicines.

New Medicines Service

The New Medicines Service is a free NHS service to help you understand your condition and get the most out of your new medicine if you have certain conditions. Ask your local pharmacy for more information.

The service will:

- Help you to find out more about the new medicine you are taking
- Help to sort out any problems you are having with your new medicine
- Give you a chance to ask questions about your medicine and discuss any concerns
- Help to improve the effectiveness of your new medicine, for example, there may be an easier or better way to take it
- Help you to make your own decisions about managing your condition
- Help you to improve your health, which could lead to fewer hospital visits

The New Medicines Service will help provide better value for you and the NHS by making sure that your medicines are right for you.

If there is an urgent problem with your medicines, don't delay and seek help immediately, by speaking to your GP practice.

Help us minimise medicines waste

Medicines are expensive, so try not to order more than you actually need. **£600,000** a year is spent in West Lancashire on wasted medicines. If this money was not wasted in this way, it could instead be spent on, for example:

- 50 hip replacements,
 - 50 cataract operations,
 - 40 heart by-pass operations,
 - 10 knee replacements
- and five full-time nurses.

Don't be tempted to share medicines intended for you with other people, as they may not be suitable for them and cause problems if they take them.



If this money was not wasted, it could instead be spent on, for example:



On wasted medicines



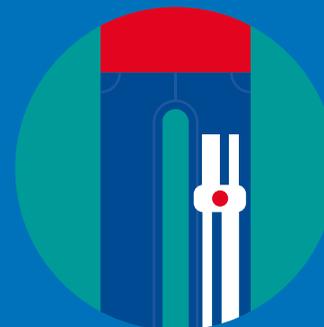
50 hip replacements



50 cataract operations



40 heart by-pass operations



10 knee replacements



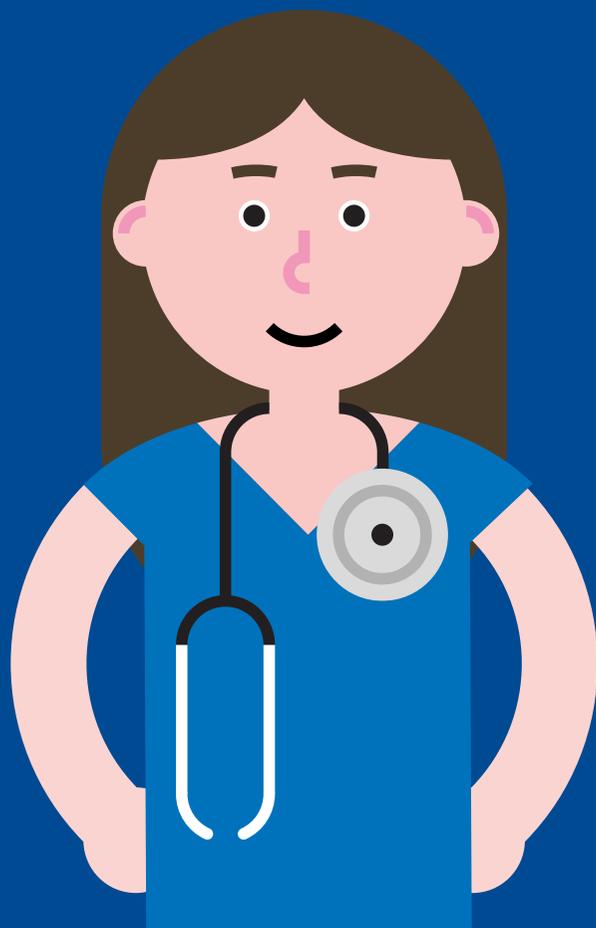
Five full-time nurses

What to do if you go into hospital

When you go to hospital as an inpatient, take all of your medication with you, including inhalers, eye drops, creams and patches.

It is helpful if, where possible, you take medicines in the boxes they originally came in. It would also be helpful to take in the white tear off part of your prescription.

Make sure the hospital knows about all the medicines you are taking, including any herbal or homeopathic remedies that you buy. This will help hospital staff to know exactly which medicines you are taking and make sure that you continue to take medicines that the hospital does not stock.



What to do if you find you have run out of medicines you need

On a rare occasion, you may find that you have run out of medication that you need to take regularly. If this happens, you may be able to get an emergency supply from any pharmacy, although it does help if you go to a pharmacy that knows you. However, this is a non-NHS service and you may be charged. It's always better to check your medicines supply every time you take them and order before you run out.

Make sure you store medicines properly

Most medicines should be stored in a cool, dry place.

Always keep all medicines out of the sight and reach of children and pets.

Don't leave medicines in sunlight or keep them in your car. If a medicine label says that it must be stored in the fridge, then it is important to ensure that you keep the medicine in its original packaging and away from direct contact with food.

What to do with left over medicines

Regularly go through your medicine cabinet and dispose of old medicines that you no longer take, even if they are still within the expiry date. You should never start taking a prescribed medicine unless it has been prescribed for you at that time.

Unwanted medicines are an increased hazard to young children who may come into contact with them and should always be stored out of reach.

The best way to safely dispose of medicines that are no longer needed is to return them to your local pharmacy. This service is available at every pharmacy and it is free of charge. Try to return unwanted medicines in their original packaging where possible, as some medicines need special handling.

✘ NEVER dispose of medicines down the toilet or sink. Medicines disposed of in this way can become a hazard to the environment and water supply.

✘ NEVER put unwanted or old medicines in the bin.

This leaflet has been prepared by a dedicated team of pharmacists who support GPs and pharmacists in West Lancashire, and includes national guidance from the NHS.

For more information on details within this leaflet, please contact your local GP or pharmacist.

To download copies of this leaflet, please visit:
www.westlancashireccg.nhs.uk

We highly value feedback from patients, the public and carers. If you would like to comment on this leaflet or on the issue of medicines waste, please contact us:

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If you want to learn more about the changes to your repeat prescriptions, please speak to your GP practice.

Leaflet created by Nicola Baxter, Head of Medicines Optimisation, NHS West Lancashire CCG.

**HELP US SAVE £600,000
BEING A HOARDER
IS OUT OF ORDER.**

For further information, visit the
NHS West Lancashire CCG website:

www.westlancashireccg.nhs.uk

