



Brunswick Park Medical Practice

Prescriptions Patient Information

Here is a little background of why we take this seriously

For a clinician to approve, sign and repeatedly prescribe medications there are certain essential checks that must happen. This is all in order to keep you safe.

Almost all medications have side effects and the information about these is detailed in the leaflet that comes with the medication. Some side effects may not always cause symptoms you may notice i.e. they may be silent and only detectable by blood tests or through a physical or mental state examination with the nurse prescriber, clinical pharmacist or your GP. For each prescription that is signed, the clinician will undertake a thorough review of your notes to satisfy themselves that the necessary checks have been undertaken and that is safe for you to have this prescription repeatedly. This does take time.

Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has produced a list of certain medications that are deemed to be safe ONLY for hospital specialists to prescribe. You will be made aware of this, if this applies to you.

Please note this process is in line with local guidance and has been agreed by all the clinicians in the Practice for reasons of patient safety.

What do I need to *do* and *when*?

Depending on your medical condition you may need to have a review every 3, 6 or 12 months.

This review does not always have to be your GP. You may see our Clinical Pharmacist Antoinette or our Nurse prescriber Elizabeth— you will be guided by our receptionist as to the most appropriate clinician for you. These are referred to as your GP prescribers in this document. Not all reviews have to be done in a face to face consultation, some can be done electronically (a review of your notes) or others on the telephone. We are trying to be safe and time efficient.

The medication 'review date' is set for your birthday month. This is so as to be a helpful reminder to you, and also helps us to stagger our patient's reviews across the year. This review date is stamped on your paper prescription, for electronic prescriptions (EPS), your Pharmacist will be able to remind you of the review date.

When starting a new medication you may need more frequent monitoring until your condition has stabilised and so the table below MAY not apply to you.

The following table is not an exhaustive list of medical conditions and expected requirements for medication reviews. If your medical condition is not listed or you are not sure please discuss this with your GP prescriber when you next visit the Practice or ask your pharmacist.

In some cases you may have more than one medical problem. Please follow the regimen for the most frequent monitoring. This serves as a guide and it may be that there will be certain exceptions to this framework or list of investigations. Ultimately the investigations required will be decided upon by the clinician. But to give you an idea see the table below:

This is not an exhaustive list and if your medication is not covered check with your pharmacist or GP administrator.

Medical Condition	Test or check up	How often
Heart conditions High blood pressure , stroke or other heart conditions (e.g. Atrial fibrillation, heart failure)	BP, height and weight Blood test Urine protein test (in some cases)	Annual (minimum)
Diabetes	Eye check (local clinic NOT at GP) Foot check (GP practice nurse) BP, height and weight Blood test Urine protein test	Stable – 6 monthly (minimum) Not stable or levels not in 'target' range – then more frequent i.e. 3 monthly.
High cholesterol	BP, height and weight Blood test	Annual (minimum)
Stroke or mini stroke (TIA)	BP, height and weight Blood test Urine protein test (in some cases if BP is too high)	Annual
Peripheral arterial disease i.e. narrowing of leg arteries either due to blockage or previous surgery (bypass of arteries)	BP, height and weight Blood test Urine protein test (in some cases if BP is too high)	Annual
Kidney disease Stage 3,4 or 5 ONLY	BP, height and weight Blood test Urine protein test Urine dipstick	Six monthly with GP or more frequent as per hospital specialist (as applicable).
Thyroid	Blood test (thyroid)	Annual
Mental Health condition requiring medication (except depression) Mental health condition not requiring medication	ECG (in some cases) BP, height and weight Blood test Specific drug levels (depending on which medication you take) No routine tests required.	Annual Annual GP appointment face to face <i>*some medications or conditions require more frequent follow up, you will discuss this with your GP prescriber or hospital specialist*</i> Annual GP follow up (minimum)
Rheumatoid Arthritis	BP, height and weight Blood test Specific drug levels (depending on which medication you take) *Some may require eye test or chest xrays.	2-3 months Annual GP appointment face to face <i>*some medications or conditions require more or less frequent follow up, you will discuss this with your GP prescriber or hospital specialist *</i>
Lung Conditions Asthma and COPD	Inhaler check with practice nurse or clinical pharmacist	Annual
Contraception tablets	BP, height and weight and completion of checklist (at reception)	6 months, with annual face to face appointment

BP = blood pressure, **ECG** = electrocardiogram, **COPD** = chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
Urine protein test = provide the first urine sample of the day, where you have avoided meat for 24h beforehand.
Urine dipstick is done in the GP surgery

FAQs

How can I request a prescription?

- **In person** - use the request slip from your previous prescription, tick the items required and hand it in to reception.
- **By post** - send it to us with a stamped addressed envelope if you want us to post it back to you.
- **Online** - follow the link at the top of this page to complete a simple registration.

****For safety reasons, no requests can be taken by phone.****

How long does a prescription take before it can be released to me or my pharmacist?

Prescriptions can take up to 72 hours to be signed.

In some rare instances it may take longer if a query has been raised. A member of staff or your pharmacist may be able to advise you for the reason for the delay.

What if I need an urgent prescription?

Ideally you should **never** have to request a prescription urgently as you should be requesting your repeat prescription when you have 10 working days remaining (not before) allowing enough time to collect your prescription and for your pharmacist to dispense it. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have requested your medication within the appropriate time frame and it is not acceptable to expect that prescriptions are signed on demand or on the same day because you have run out.

It will be at the clinician's discretion as to whether requests for urgent prescriptions can be granted and this must be on a case by case basis.

If you repeated request medications urgently because you have not planned it within the advised time frame you may receive a letter from the practice with a warning.

How many months is my prescription for?

Each prescription should be for no longer than two months. This is in line with local guidance.

Some medications can only be issued for shorter periods of time for safety reasons – you will be made aware of this at the time by the clinician.

Sometimes we reduce the number of days of medication we can issue because you may be over due your medication review. This happens when you may fail to respond to three requests to come in for your necessary medication checks. In these scenarios we do write messages with your prescription to your pharmacist. This is for safety reasons ONLY.

Inhalers, creams or ointments, injectable medications and dressings or devices will also ONLY be prescribed in two month quantities.

I had a medication that was prescribed as a one off or as a trial (e.g. an acute prescription) and I would like more.

Medication prescribed as an 'acute' prescription **may** not be repeatedly prescribed by a GP. This is often because the prescription was only ever intended for short term use. Ongoing use of medications does require monitoring and discussion with your GP so your request may be rejected until the necessary checks are undertaken. Please speak to our receptionist to find out what the next steps may be for you, it does vary from case to case.

I was prescribed a medication or had a change in dose when I went to see my specialist (either NHS or private)

In the event that you have been advised to change your medication regime (whether that is a new medication, dose change or change in the timings or frequency) your GP will require a document from the specialist before ANY adjustments can be made to your prescription.

It takes time for letters to reach us, often one month. Therefore, to avoid delays please request a prescription from your specialist at your appointment and go to the hospital pharmacy for your first months' supply. If you have a copy of your hospital letter you may bring it for the surgery to take a copy.

Any prescriptions issued outside the GP surgery either at the hospital or privately (FP10 forms) will not be converted to a prescription by your GP you **must** get this prescription from the hospital pharmacy. This reduces the risk of delaying any medication changes deemed necessary and also gives your GP time to review the letters properly. **The first prescription will not be issued by your GP.**

If the medication prescribed by your specialist is required on a long term basis, we will be able to issue subsequent prescriptions assuming the following:

1. The medication is licensed and suitable for prescription by a General Practitioner
2. The medication is listed on the Barnet NHS formulary
3. A letter from your consultant detailing the drug and dosage schedule, and confirming that you have been fully counselled about the medication. This letter must have been received by the Practice. Additionally your GP prescriber must be satisfied that is safe for you to have.

My prescription was not signed or it was 'rejected' why? What does this mean?

For specialist hospital prescriptions: In some cases we may write back to your specialist if we have queries about their choice of medication (for reasons stated above). This is because sometimes the specialist not be aware of all your medications or conditions, or the particular medication they have requested may not be one that the Barnet CCG have approved for GPs to prescribe. Please bear with us as this can take time which is why your prescriptions during this time may have to be provided by your hospital specialist.

For GP prescriptions: This may be because one or more of the essential checks that you may have to undertake is outstanding.

It may be an acute prescription (see above) and was only intended for short term use.

I am going on holiday how early and how much of medicine can I request?

When you request your medication state the start and end dates of your holiday so we can ensure an appropriate supply is provided. The maximum we will supply regardless of the length of your holiday is 3 months.

Why am I having to request different items several times during the month?

If your medications are all out of sync then please discuss this with your pharmacist so we can bring back everything in line and therefore you will only have to go to your pharmacist once every on