



How else can your pharmacist help you?

Pharmacists can do much more for you than just dispense medications. They are your medication management experts and can

- ensure that your medication is appropriate for your condition;
- minimize drug interactions and allergic reactions;
- help you with non-prescription medications;
- tell you how to properly take and store your drugs;
- give you advice on natural health products
- offer assistance with your weight-loss or stop-smoking goals;
- monitor and help manage chronic conditions such as diabetes, asthma, or high blood pressure; and
- monitor your response to your medicine and provide additional support in using your drugs properly.

Get to know your pharmacist – *the more they know you, the more they can help.*

With at least five years of university education, pharmacists are the medication management experts on your healthcare team. They can minimize the possibility of drug interactions and allergic reactions and make sure you get the most benefit from your medication.

Making sure your treatment is appropriate

Pharmacists make certain any drug therapy is in your best interest. To do this, they may need to

- use lab results to monitor progress toward your treatment goals,
- ask about what non-prescription drugs and herbal supplements you use, and
- understand your current lifestyle and living environment.

It is vital that you have a good relationship with your pharmacist. Your pharmacist can only determine what is best for you, and what is safe, if they know your history, your lifestyle, and your current health condition.



**You and your pharmacist...
a healthy combination!**



For more information, visit the Alberta College of Pharmacy website:

abpharmacy.ca

Understanding your pharmacist's role in renewing or adapting your prescription



Your pharmacist's role has expanded. What does this mean for you?

Using their professional judgment, pharmacists may be able to renew or adapt your existing prescriptions, if it's in your best interest to do so.

Q

What is meant by adapting a prescription?

A

In the past, when your pharmacist identified a need to change your prescription, they had to contact the original prescriber for authorization before making the change. Now, pharmacists can adapt the prescription and notify the original prescriber afterward.

There are different ways your pharmacist can adapt prescriptions. They can do the following:

1. Substitute one drug for another, within the same class of drugs, to avoid potential side effects. For example, two drugs may treat the same symptoms, but have a different active ingredient. Your pharmacist will choose the one most suitable for you.
2. Alter the dosage of your new medication to be better suited to your age, weight, and/or coexisting health conditions.
3. Dispense your medication in a different form (e.g., a liquid rather than a tablet), if that makes it easier for you to use.
4. Renew your prescription for continuity of care. For example, if you regularly take medication for high blood pressure, but can't get to your original prescriber before it runs out, your pharmacist may renew that prescription. They will notify your original prescriber and arrange with you for follow up.

Note: Unless they have special authorization from the Alberta College of Pharmacy, pharmacists cannot alter the dosage on refills. No pharmacists can adapt or refill prescriptions for narcotics or controlled drugs.

Q

Will my pharmacist renew or adapt my prescription?

A

Maybe. It depends on whether or not your treatment is current, whether your pharmacist has enough information about your condition and treatment, is familiar with you and your health history and whether, in their professional judgment, it is in your best interest to do so.

Q

What questions will my pharmacist ask when renewing or adapting my prescription?

A

They may ask you what you are taking your medication for, how you are taking it, if it is working or not, and if you are having any side effects.

Q

Does this mean I no longer need to see my doctor?

A

No. Although pharmacists have the authority to renew or adapt your prescription, this does not replace your need to see your doctor for regular checkups and monitoring of your condition.

Q

Can a pharmacist choose not to renew or adapt my prescription?

A

Yes. Pharmacists are not obligated to renew or adapt a prescription. They will consider each situation individually to determine if they have sufficient information about you and your health status to make an informed decision that is in your best interest.

Q

Is my pharmacist qualified to renew or adapt my prescription?

A

Yes. Your pharmacist is your medication management expert. They are licensed, regulated healthcare professionals. Their knowledge, combined with their access to your medication and health history, put them in the best position to identify potential drug interactions or allergic reactions and ensure your treatment is safe, effective, and appropriate.



Pharmacist guidelines to renewing or adapting prescriptions

Although pharmacists can renew and adapt prescriptions, they are not obligated to do so.

The *Standards of Practice for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians*, created and enforced by the Alberta College of Pharmacy, set out expectations that pharmacists must adhere to.

Using their professional judgment, your pharmacist must consider the following:

- Do they have the original prescription and is your treatment current?
- Do they have sufficient information about you and your health status to make an informed decision?
- Is renewing or adapting your prescription in your best interest?

If your pharmacist can answer yes to these questions, they may renew or adapt your prescription, then document their decision and notify the original prescriber.

