

Welcome to PharmaCare 101 – What PharmaCare covers.

**What PharmaCare  
covers**  
PharmaCare 101

 BRITISH  
COLUMBIA


Pharmaceutical, Laboratory & Blood Services Division  
Ministry of Health



PharmaCare covers:

- Most prescription medications,
- Pharmacy services, and
- Many devices and medical supplies

Many plans cover 100% of the cost, but the Fair PharmaCare plan coverage has deductibles.




## Medications

- Most prescribed drugs by licenced B.C. prescribers, including:
  - Medications commonly prescribed for many conditions
  - Medications for medical assistance in dying (MAiD)
  - Contraceptives – many are free
  - Smoking cessation drugs

PharmaCare covers most of the drugs that are prescribed by a physician, dentist, midwife, nurse practitioner, optometrist, pharmacist, or podiatrist licensed and practicing in B.C.

This includes:

- Medications commonly prescribed for hypertension, high cholesterol, hypothyroidism, diabetes, bacterial infections, pain and other common conditions
- Medications for medical assistance in dying (MAiD) patients,
- Contraceptives – many of which are free, and
- Smoking cessation drugs



**PharmaCare does not cover...**

- Medications purchased
  - from pharmacies not enrolled in PharmaCare
  - outside B.C. (in most cases)
  - over the counter (some exceptions)
- Prescribed by a veterinarian
- Medications for infertility, cosmetic purposes, herbal medicine
- Medications paid for by private or federal insurer; WorkSafe BC or ICBC; or an award for damages or settlement agreement
- Medications provided to patients within hospital programs (such as BC Cancer Agency)

PharmaCare can only cover prescriptions filled by a community pharmacy that is enrolled in PharmaCare. The vast majority of B.C. pharmacies are PharmaCare providers.

Additionally, PharmaCare does not cover:

- Prescriptions purchased outside B.C. (though there are some exceptions for rural areas where people must cross a provincial border to the nearest pharmacy),
- Drugs purchased over the counter (with some exceptions),
- Medications that have not been reviewed by PharmaCare or have been reviewed and PharmaCare has decided not to cover them (this is known as non-benefit), though sometimes coverage can be approved through Special Authority,
- Medications prescribed by a vet,
- Drugs that treat infertility, are for cosmetic purposes, or herbal medicine products,
- Drugs paid for by a private or federal insurer (such as Veterans Affairs), WorkSafe BC or ICBC, or an award for damages or settlement agreement, or
- Drugs provided to patients within hospital programs such as through BC Cancer Agency, BC Transplant Society, and vaccines funded through BC Centre for Disease Control

## Pharmacy services

- Assessments for minor ailments and contraception (MACS)
- Medication reviews
- Dispensing prescriptions
- Medication injections (eligible vaccines and drugs)
- Adaptations, such as:
  - Changing dose, regimen or formulation of your medication
  - Medication substitutions
  - Renewing prescriptions



PharmaCare covers many pharmacy services. These include:

- Assessment for minor ailments and contraception (also known as MACS),
- Medication reviews to support individuals taking 5 or more medications,
- Fees for dispensing prescriptions,
- Injections of eligible medications, and
- Any adaptations that a pharmacist may make, such as:
  - Adjusting the dose, medication, regimen, or formula of a prescription,
  - Substituting a different but similar medication, or
  - Renewing prescriptions



## Devices

**Prostheses**

- Limb, breast, ear, eye, nose
- Osseointegration

**Orthoses**


- Children < 18 years old

**Offloading devices**

- Foot orthotics, adaptive shoes for diabetic foot ulcers

As part of the Prosthetic and Orthotic Program, PharmaCare covers:

- Prostheses for limbs, breasts, ears, eyes, and the nose,
- Orthoses for children 18 years and under if they are worn full-time to prevent future deformity or to maintain basic functionality, and
- Offloading devices – foot orthotics and adaptive shoes that help people recover from diabetic foot ulcers




**Medical supplies**

**Diabetes supplies**

- Insulin pumps
- Blood glucose test strips
- Continuous and flash glucose monitors

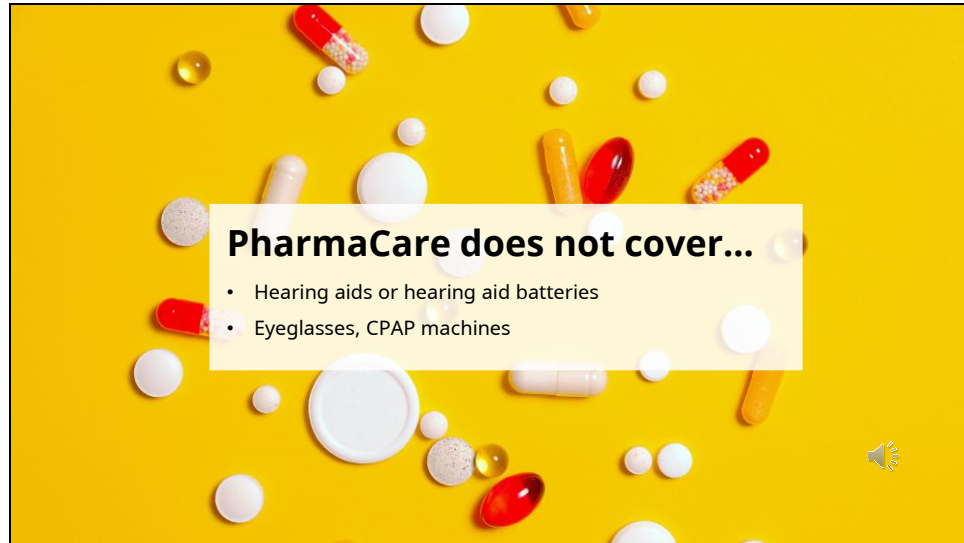
**Ostomy supplies**

- Tubing, pouches, barrier products, etc.



PharmaCare covers diabetes supplies, such as insulin pumps and glucose test strips. An endocrinologist or other diabetes specialist must confirm the patient meets medical criteria. A basic pump is paid in full, regardless of PharmaCare plan.

Ostomy products may also be covered for patients who have undergone bowel or bladder surgery that results in a colostomy, ileostomy or urostomy, requiring an external pouch – restricted to ostomates.



PharmaCare does not help pay for:

- Medical supplies such as glasses, hearing aids, CPAP machines





Thanks for watching this PharmaCare 101 video on what PharmaCare covers. For more videos, visit [gov.bc.ca/PharmaCare101](http://gov.bc.ca/PharmaCare101)