

PBS-subsidised opioids – patient information



Your doctor will need to take time with you to discuss your ongoing pain treatment needs.

- In order to prescribe a PBS-subsidised opioid medicine, your doctor will need to review your condition and reassess harms and benefits from opioid treatment to ensure that you meet the eligibility criteria for prescribing opioid treatment through the PBS.
- Your doctor may also:
 - discuss your treatment duration and goals;
 - arrange regular follow-up appointments;
 - refer you to other health professionals such as physiotherapists who may assist with your pain; or
 - refer you to another doctor (or a specialist) for a review of the underlying condition causing your pain.



Your doctor may need to request a PBS authority approval to prescribe higher quantities and/or repeats

- Your doctor may be able to write a PBS prescription for up to 3 months treatment provided they request an authority approval.
- When requesting a PBS authority approval, your doctor must provide information about how your condition meets the PBS restriction requirements.
- In some cases, your doctor may be required to refer you to another doctor for a review of your pain management. This will occur every 12 months.
- Secondary reviews are an opportunity for you and your doctors to re-assess what you need to manage your pain, and discuss services that may be relevant for you.
- It is not mandatory to consult a pain specialist. Any doctor registered in Australia may conduct this review.
- The secondary review may be undertaken by phone or telehealth consultation.



There are alternative options if you do not meet the PBS eligibility criteria.

- It is important that any opioid medication is not stopped suddenly, or without medical supervision.
- Discuss alternative treatment options and pain management strategies that are available with your doctor. Visit the [Painaustralia](#) website for further information.
- Further information for patients and carers can be found on the Therapeutic Goods Administration's [opioid resources](#) page.
- The NPS MedicineWise website also hosts important information relating to the use of opioid medicines for the [treatment of chronic non-cancer pain](#) as well as patient information relating to [prescribing opioids](#).