

35th MEDICAL GROUP
Military Pharmacy Services and
Benefits



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The goal of the 35th Medical Group Pharmacy staff is to provide

“Trusted Pharmacy Care to America’s Heroes”.

The information in this pamphlet is provided to assist eligible beneficiaries in using their pharmacy benefits. The information provided is general in nature and limited space precludes the inclusion of every exception and all details. Every effort has been made to ensure the information is accurate as of the date of publication. It is subject to change.

We hope you find this information to be helpful.

The Pharmacy Staff

Guide to Military Pharmacy Services and Benefits
35th Medical Group, Misawa Air Base, Japan

This pamphlet has been developed to assist beneficiaries of pharmacy services, with particular reference to Outpatient Pharmacy Service at Misawa Air Base. It provides information on what services are available. It is intended to assist you in obtaining these services in the most efficient and convenient manner.

Additionally, information is provided describing alternative sources for military beneficiaries to obtain pharmacy service (TRICARE Network pharmacies and the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy Program). Each has its own distinct rules regarding services available, eligibility and cost. This pamphlet is intended to familiarize patients with the policies associated with each. We hope this information will assist you when seeking pharmacy service, whether at our pharmacy or one of the alternative programs.

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I. GENERAL MILITARY PHARMACY SERVICE POLICY

The operation of all military base pharmacies is governed by Department of Defense (DoD) policy, Service (Army, Navy, Air Force) regulations and US drug control laws. Your Pharmacy maintains practice in conformity with federal laws, to the maximum extent feasible. Additional policy for prescription dispensing is determined by the Pharmacy & Therapeutics (P&T) Function.

A. ELIGIBILITY: Active duty members of the US Armed Forces, their dependent family members, retired military, family members and surviving spouses are eligible to receive prescriptions from military base pharmacies. There is no charge for prescriptions filled by base pharmacies; however proof of eligibility is required at the time of service. This is accomplished by showing a valid military identification card and by electronic verification via the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System (DEERS).

B. AUTHORIZATION TO PICK-UP PRESCRIPTIONS: Your prescriptions and prescription information are private and can only be released to you or someone you authorize. Your agent must present proof of your eligibility (military ID card, or copy front and back). Without the required item, service may be denied. Parents or legal guardians may pick up prescriptions for dependent children under the age of 16.

C. THE FORMULARY: In accordance with DoD and Air Force policy, the P&T Function develops and maintains a Formulary. The Formulary is the list of medications (and supplies) routinely stocked by Pharmacy. The P&T Function is attended by the medical staff with representation from Pharmacy, Nursing and Medical Staff. The P&T Function is responsible for developing policy to ensure safe and proper use of medications and to ensure that service is provided within the limits of the resources (budget) available. The Formulary is developed by the P&T Function to meet the needs of the facility's medical staff and the patients for whom they provide care. The formulary is updated periodically. Providers assigned to the medical facility must use the drugs listed on the formulary. By DoD policy, prescriptions from providers outside the military medical facility may be filled only when the drug is one of those listed on the formulary. Not all drugs are available at military pharmacies. Note: Throughout this document the term provider is used to describe any healthcare professional authorized by law or regulation to prescribe medications. This includes physicians, dentists, physician assistants, and others.

D. GENERIC SUBSTITUTION: Many of the medications stocked by military pharmacies are generic equivalent drugs. DoD regulations authorize pharmacy personnel to automatically substitute generic equivalent drugs when brand name drugs are prescribed by military doctors. For prescriptions written by stateside civilian doctors the pharmacy may substitute, in accordance with local state laws.

A generic equivalent drug is one that is the same chemical entity, in the same dosage form (tablet, capsule, etc.), but made by a different manufacturer. Many states allow pharmacists to

dispense a generic equivalent product, unless the prescriber directs otherwise. Providers usually do this with a statement on the prescription label “no substitution,” or “dispense as written.”

E. FORMULARY RESTRICTIONS: DoD policy does not permit the pharmacy to restrict formulary medications based on beneficiary category; however, certain other types of restrictions are allowed. Drugs may be restricted for use by a particular specialty. For example, some medications may be restricted to cardiology only. A cardiologist will have special training to prescribe and monitor these restricted medications. These types of restrictions are unique to each individual medical facility, as determined by the facility’s P&T Function, and are intended to ensure safe and appropriate use. By DoD policy, restrictions by specialty areas must be applied equally to all patients, regardless of whether they are active duty, dependent or retired.

F. NON-FORMULARY DRUGS: While DoD and service policy require staff to use medications listed on the formulary, it is recognized that special circumstances occasionally arise in which formulary medications are not suitable. In these special situations, DoD policy allows the medical facility to purchase drugs not listed on the formulary on a case-by-case basis. In these cases, prior approval by the medical facility commander (or designee) is required to validate the special clinical circumstances. DoD policy limits this authority to prescriptions written by the medical facility’s staff. Once approved for an individual patient, the pharmacy may keep a small stock of the drug on hand as needed to provide for continuity in refilling the prescription for that patient.

G. MAIL-ORDER PRESCRIPTION SERVICE: Mail-order prescription service is available from the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy Program (see section III).

II. MISAWA AIR BASE PHARMACY SERVICES

The pharmacy provides medication profiling, screening for drug allergies, drug interactions, therapeutic overlap and duplication. In addition to the outpatient prescription service, the pharmacy provides Inpatient Pharmacy Service, and Pharmacy Prescription Refill Clinic.

The Refill Clinic ensures uninterrupted care while patients wait for the next medical appointment. The patient undergoes a clinical interview with the pharmacist to monitor for treatment effectiveness, adverse effects, and laboratory values. Pharmacy is authorized to refill a medication for one month with zero refills.

A. PHARMACY HOURS: The outpatient pharmacy is closed on federal holidays, family days, and designated readiness exercise days. Closure dates and holiday hours of operation can be found posted at the pharmacy windows or on the 35th Medical Group facebook page.

Main Pharmacy (226-6607)
Mon - Fri, 0700 - 1700
Weekends, Federal Holidays, Closed

Prescription Refill Line (226-6194)
24 hours

B. NEW PRESCRIPTIONS FROM CLINICS: If you were seen by a doctor, your prescriptions will be entered into the hospital's computer network during your appointment. You must check-in to the pharmacy in order to have the prescription filled.

C. NEW PRESCRIPTIONS FROM CIVILIAN DOCTORS OR OTHER MILITARY FACILITIES: The pharmacy accepts and fills written prescriptions for medications listed on the Formulary. The pharmacy does stock many commonly prescribed drugs. A Formulary drug listing is available to your provider.

New prescriptions from stateside doctors must have the patient's name, sponsor's social security number and prefix indicating relation to sponsor, allergies, phone number and address including zip code.

D. REFILLS: Please call-in all refill requests to the automated phone-in refill system (226-6607). Refills called-in before 0700 hours Monday through Friday, are processed and will be available for pick-up at 1000, the same duty day. Refills called in after 0700 Friday will be ready the following duty day. Prescriptions called in on Family Days or holidays, will be ready on the following duty day. Please listen to the refill system carefully for prescription pick up dates.

Follow the recorded instructions. Only touch-tone phones may be used. However, some portable (cordless) phones do not work due to problems with transmission quality. If you experience difficulty using the system, an option is available to leave a voice message or to speak with a pharmacy staff member during normal duty hours. Any of our staff will be happy to demonstrate how to use the system.

We request that you use the call-in refill service for all of your prescription refill needs. This ensures your prescriptions will be ready for pickup upon your arrival.

E. GENERAL PRESCRIPTION INFORMATION AND POLICIES: Dispensing Quantities: The following policies define the maximum quantities and refills for prescription dispensing:

Non-controlled (prescription) drugs: A maximum 90-day supply with refills for 1 year is authorized for medications used for chronic maintenance therapy. Refills are honored for 1 year from the date the prescription was originally written. Exceptions to the 90-days supply policy apply to a small number of more restrictive products. Regardless of the policy, the pharmacy cannot dispense more medication than your provider prescribed. For example, if your provider requested a 30-day supply you will be issued a 30-day supply.

Controlled Drugs: The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) designated a number of prescription medications as controlled drugs. These are usually items such as narcotic pain relievers, stimulants, tranquilizers and sleeping pills that have a potential for abuse. A number of laws and restrictions are associated with the prescribing and dispensing of these medications to limit the potential for diversion for other than appropriate therapeutic use.

Schedule II drugs - up to a 30-days supply (except ADD and ADHD drugs - up to a 3 months supply when ADD or ADHD is specified). By law, prescriptions for these medications cannot be refilled. Schedule III, IV and V - up to a 30-days supply and refills for 6 months from the date written.

The pharmacy performs a 100% ID check for prescription service for two reasons. ID checks ensure eligibility for prescription service and provide the pharmacy a method of double-checking that the right patient gets the correct medication.

Prescriptions and refills not picked up will be held for 7 days, after which they will be returned to stock.

By US law, the federal government must bill insurance companies for service provided when health insurance coverage exists. Importantly, the money collected from insurance companies goes directly into the hospital's budget and is used to support operations. You will be asked to fill out DD Form 2569 requesting information on any medical health insurance program in which you may be enrolled. There is no cost to you, only a few minutes of your time to complete the form. You will be issued a TPC card at the medical service cashier's cage, which you will need to present when picking up prescriptions.

III. TRICARE PHARMACY SERVICE FOR MILITARY BENEFICIARIES: The other source of pharmacy service is mail-order prescription service which is available to active duty military and TRICARE eligible beneficiaries.

TRICARE MAIL-ORDER PHARMACY (TMOP): The TMOP is managed by a DoD contractor. All active duty military and TRICARE eligible beneficiaries, including those over 65 years old, are eligible to use this service. Unlike TRICARE network pharmacies, a formulary is used to determine which drugs are available. Not all medications will be available, however in comparison to the base pharmacies, the TMOP formulary is extremely broad. Co-pays at the TMOP are charged per prescription (not per 30-days supply as at network pharmacies) and there is no cost to the patient for a generic medication, or \$9 for a brand name medication. Up to a 90-days supply of non-controlled medications (30-days for controlled medications) can be dispensed. Thus, service at the TMOP can be significantly less costly than at a network pharmacy. Seven to ten days should be allowed for processing and delivery. To request information, or register to use the TRICARE Mail-Order Pharmacy, please go to tricare.com.

Some limitations when using either a TRICARE Network Pharmacy or the TMOP are as follows: If you turned 65 years old on or after 1 Apr 01, you must be enrolled in Medicare Part B to receive the pharmacy benefit outside the base pharmacies.

The TRICARE Network and TMOP pharmacies have a mandatory generic substitution

policy; meaning that the pharmacy must dispense a generic equivalent drug product, if such a product is available, unless your doctor directs no substitution on the prescription. Most over-the-counter (OTC) medications or products are not covered.

If you have a health insurance policy with prescription benefits (other than military healthcare) you are ineligible to participate in TRICARE Network or TMOP pharmacies unless the medication is not covered, or prescription coverage by the policy is exhausted. If your prescription benefit is denied for this reason, you may claim reimbursement for charges not covered by your insurance policy from TRICARE . Contact the TRICARE Service Center (001-65-6339-2676) for more information.



