

Low Cost Options for Prescription Drugs

Do you take prescription drugs? Does your health plan cover prescription drugs? The programs listed here offer free or discount programs for people with low or modest income. You must meet the program's eligibility requirements to qualify.

Manufacturer Programs for Free Prescription Drugs

Limited prescription drugs are available free or with a small co-payment. Often the doctor who writes the prescription must contact the drug company to provide information about you and your prescription. The Internet sites tell you and your doctor which pharmaceutical companies offer assistance programs, the prescription drugs covered by each program, how to make a request for assistance, and the program's eligibility criteria. Usually the drug company delivers a three-month supply to your doctor. You or your doctor may need to reapply periodically to continue receiving the prescriptions.

Paper and Internet-Based Directories

BenefitsCheckUp

This web site helps you determine if you qualify for any government or private programs that provide lower cost prescription drugs. This service is provided by the National Council on Aging.

Internet: www.benefitscheckup.org

Partnership for Prescription Assistance

This Internet resource states it is a "single point of access to more than 475 public and private patient assistance programs, including nearly 200 offered by pharmaceutical companies." It provides information to access over 2500 prescription drugs. From the home page click on "Get Help" to see the programs that you may qualify for, the products covered by the programs, and to download applications for the programs. Click on "About Us" to see a directory of the companies offering prescription drugs and their programs. There you will also see a Frequently Asked Questions section which provides much information about how the programs work and who is eligible. Help is also available by phone to ask if you are eligible. This site also has a Free/Low Cost Clinic Finder when you enter your zip code. The site also lists copayment programs which provide financial assistance for certain health care costs to patients who qualify financially and medically.

Call: 1-888-477-2669

Internet: www.pparx.org/Intro.php

NeedyMeds.com

This resource provides information on programs that offer lower priced drugs. Under Patient Assistance Programs, click on Generic Name Drugs or Brand Name Drugs to see if your drug is listed and which programs may be available to you. Click on

Company List for a list of companies that have and do not have prescription assistance programs. The web site includes information on disease-based assistance, free/low cost clinics in your area, and discount drug cards.

Internet: www.needymeds.com

RxAssist

You must register on-line to use their site to locate patient assistance programs. Search their database of prescription drugs by drug name or the name of the company that manufactures your drug. Some requests may be completed on line. Their web site is updated daily and they state they are “the Web’s most current and comprehensive directory of patient assistance programs.” The “Frequently Asked Questions about Patient Assistance Programs” section provides a more detailed explanation of how these programs work. There are eligibility requirements. Sponsored by Volunteers in Health Care and supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Call: 1-877-844-8442 or 401-729-3284

Internet: www.rxassist.org

RxOutreach

RxOutreach provides prescription drugs to people who are uninsured and to people who have limited prescription drug coverage. It is a fully-licensed mail order pharmacy offering lower prices for over 400 medications. Prescriptions are mailed to your home. There is an income limit to qualify.

Call: 1-800-769-3880

Internet: www.rxoutreach.com

Together RX Access Program

This prescription savings program is sponsored by 10 pharmaceutical companies. You apply for a free card and get a savings of 25-40% on some brand-name prescriptions and certain products. The amount you save depends on the prescription drug purchased, the quantity purchased, and the pharmacy where you purchase it.

Depending on the pharmacy you may save money on generics as well. There is no cost to enroll or use the card. There are eligibility requirements including an income limit.

Also, you cannot be eligible for Medicare or have any prescription drug coverage.

Call: 1-800-444-4106

Internet: www.togetherrxaccess.com

Manufacturer Patient Assistant Programs

Glaxo SmithKline

Call: 1-888-825-5249

Internet: www.bridgestoaccess.gsk.com for non-oncology prescriptions

Internet: www.commitmentoaccess.gsk.com for oncology prescriptions

Merck Patient Assistance Program

Call: 1-800-727-5400

Internet: www.merck.com/merckhelps**Novartis**

Call: 1-800-245-5356

Internet: <http://www.patientassistancenow.com>**Pfizer**

Call: 1-866-706-2400

Internet: www.pfizerhelpfulanswers.com

FEDERAL and STATE

Medicare Part D. Medicare approves companies to sell Medicare Part D prescription coverage to Medicare enrollees. The Medicare web site lists plans for your area. These plans must cover certain drugs. Be sure the plans you are considering cover your specific drugs. Enrollees pay a premium to the health plan providing this prescription coverage. Medicare enrollees need to sign up within a certain time period of being eligible or must pay a late penalty the rest of the time they are enrolled.

Low income enrollees may be eligible to receive help paying for their Medicare Part D prescription coverage. This assistance is called Extra Help or Low Income Subsidy (LIS). You may qualify for the full subsidy or partial subsidy depending on your income and assets. With a full subsidy you do not pay a deductible and you have lower co-pays for your prescriptions. Depending on the plan you choose you may have no premium. With a partial subsidy the deductible is lower, the co-pays are lower, and the premium you pay is lower.

Call Medicare at 1-800-633-4227 (1-800-MEDICARE)

Internet: www.medicare.govCall the Minnesota Senior LinkAge Line[®] 1-800-333-2433Internet: www.mnaging.org

See Social Security Administration www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp for information and an application for Extra Help. Or call 1-800-772-1213 to use the Social Security recording to hear some eligibility information regarding Medicare prescription drug benefits and to request an application for help with Medicare prescription drug plan costs.

State health programs. Medical assistance (MA) and MinnesotaCare[®] cover prescription drugs. You may have co-pays. You must meet income and asset requirements. Contact your county human services agency. See www.health.state.mn.us/clearinghouse/public.html or call the Clearinghouse at 651-201-5178 or 1-800-657-3793 if you need your county human services phone number.

OTHER SOURCES OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

The Minnesota Senior LinkAge Line® provides a free service that helps callers of all ages locate programs to help lower costs for the prescription drugs they need. (This service was formerly called RxConnect.) Most of these programs have eligibility requirements. They review the eligibility requirements with the caller and provide applications for that particular program. This service is provided by the Minnesota Board on Aging through the Senior LinkAge Line®.
Call: 1-800-333-2433

Your Health Plan may offer a prescription drug benefit, a drug discount program, or a mail order drug program. Call customer services/member services at your health plan. This phone number usually appears on the back of your health plan card.

Veterans (including non-service connected conditions) may receive medications prescribed by a VA physician through their VA health benefits. There are many factors that determine whether there will be a co-pay and if there is how much it will be. Contact your VA health care facility.
Call toll free: 1-877-222-8387
Internet at: www.va.gov/elig

Retired military personnel 65 years and older (enrolled in Part B Medicare) have retail and mail order drug benefits under TRICARE for Life with a small copayment.
Call TRICARE for Life: 1-866-773-0404.
Internet: TriCare Pharmacy Home Delivery
<http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/ProfileFilter.do;jsessionid=MHRDgjSrLscBGVnd2LvXQRddfHN4MGCYq1hmqpnlb6QnBnByTQ9f1208801765?purI=%2Fhome%2FPrescriptions%2FFillingPrescriptions%2FTMOP>

Note that TRICARE for Minnesotans is called TRIWest.
Call TRIWest: 1-888-874-9378
Internet: www.triwest.com

Free Prescription Drug Discount Cards. Cards are pre-activated and ready to use at participating pharmacies. Print copies from the web or ask the specific organization for a free card.

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FamilyWize. Free card, no eligibility requirements, discount prices, use at participating pharmacies. Card says “for all prescriptions not covered by insurance.”
Call: 1-866-810-3784 or United Way 2-1-1.
Internet: www.familywize.org

Minnesota Drug Card. Free card, no eligibility requirements, discount prices. Useful for the uninsured and underinsured. Helps pay for prescription drugs insurance does not cover.

Call: 1-888-952-8376

Internet: www.mndrugcard.com

Ramsey County Rx card. Ramsey county provides a free prescription drug discount card to Ramsey county residents. There is no annual fee. It can be used at participating pharmacies in Ramsey County. The pharmacy activates the card. Discount averages 20 percent on prescription drugs not covered by insurance.

Call: 651 266-8000

Internet: www.co.ramsey.mn.us

In person: St. Paul - Ramsey Department of Public Health, 555 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN and Ramsey County Manager's Office, 15 West Kellogg Blvd., Suite 250, St. Paul, MN

Some organizations sponsor prescription drug discount programs but require a membership fee to be eligible for the discount.

AARP Prescription Discount Program (American Association of Retire Persons)

Call: 1-800-456-2277 (press 0)

Internet: www.aarp-pharmacy.com

PlanPlus

Call: 1-866-855-7526

Internet: www.planplushealthcare.com

Minnesota Department of Health, Managed Care Systems Section

Minnesota Health Information Clearinghouse

P.O. Box 64882

St. Paul, MN 55164-0882

651-201-5100 800-657-3916 TTY: 651-201-5797

Upon request, this information will be made available in alternative format such as large print, Braille or cassette tape. Call 651-201-5100

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