

3rd Floor, 5700 Yonge Street
Toronto ON M2M 4K5
Tel.: 416-327-8109
Fax.: 416-327-8912
www.ontario.ca/health

5700, rue Yonge, 3e étage
Toronto ON M2M 4K5
Tél. : 416 327-8109
Télééc. : 416 327-8912
www.ontario.ca/sante



Dear Ontarian,

I'd like to take this occasion to wish you a happy upcoming birthday and to let you know about a number of Ontario government programs designed for seniors. Read on for information on paying less for prescription drugs, free cancer screening and other resources.

Pay less for prescription drugs

On the first day of the month after you turn 65 years of age, you will be automatically enrolled in the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program, which covers most of the costs of your prescription drugs. Take your prescription and your Ontario health card to any Ontario pharmacy and tell the pharmacist you are eligible for the ODB program.

What drugs are covered by this program?

For a list of covered prescription drugs go to ontario.ca/DrugBenefit or ask your pharmacist. Eligible drugs must be prescribed by Ontario doctors or other licensed health care professionals and must be dispensed by a registered Ontario pharmacy.

How much will I need to pay?	
If you are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a single senior with income above \$19,300; or• a senior couple with a combined income above \$32,300	You will pay: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first \$100 of total prescription costs at the beginning of every program year – this is the 'deductible'; and• A small fee of up to \$6.11 (the exact amount will depend on what your pharmacy charges) – this is the 'co-payment'.

What if I can't afford the deductible and co-payment?

You can apply for the Seniors Co-Payment Program if you are:

- a single senior with an income of \$19,300 or less; or
- a senior couple with a combined income of \$32,300 or less.

If you're eligible, you will pay no yearly deductible and only up to \$2.00 per prescription.

In order to apply, complete the Co-payment Application for Seniors form and send it to the Ministry of Health. You can get application forms:

- at most Ontario pharmacies
- through the mail; Call 416-503-4586 or 1-888-405-0405 to have one sent to you
- online at ontario.ca/DrugBenefit

Send your application at least one month before you turn 65 so that you are enrolled by the time you are eligible for the Ontario Drug Benefit program.

What else should I know about the Ontario Drug Benefit program?

If you have an insurance plan that includes drug benefits, ask the insurance company if your plan covers the deductible and co-payments.

If your family is currently enrolled in the Trillium Drug Program (TDP), your enrolment will end when all individuals in your household turn 65. There will be no interruption to your benefits. You will continue to receive coverage under the Ontario Drug Benefit program as a senior.

Free MedsCheck

If you're taking three or more medications, you can participate in a free annual medication review with your pharmacist. Your pharmacist can talk to you about over-the-counter drugs, natural health products and prescription medications. For more information, ask your pharmacist or visit ontario.ca/MedsCheck.

Cancer Prevention and Cancer Screening

It's important to think about cancer prevention and cancer screening. Early stages of certain cancers can be difficult to see or feel. Ontario's cancer screening programs offer people in certain age groups who have no cancer symptoms the opportunity to get regularly screened for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer.

If you have 5 minutes, visit MyCancerIQ.ca to assess your personal risk and create a customized plan to reduce your risk today. Print your results/action plan and share it with your doctor. Learn more at ontario.ca/ScreenForLife.

Free Vaccines

Vaccines protect you and those around you from serious preventable diseases. Ontario offers the following free vaccines for seniors:

- **Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis**
(once in adulthood)
- **Tetanus and diphtheria**
(every 10 years)
- **Flu Shot** (every fall)
- **Pneumococcal** (at age 65)
- **Shingles** (between ages 65 and 70)

You may be eligible to receive other free vaccines if you have certain medical conditions or other high-risk factors. Talk to your health care providers or local public health unit about recommended vaccines. More information is available at ontario.ca/Vaccines.

I wish you many healthy years to come.

Yours sincerely,



Patrick Dicerni
Assistant Deputy Minister, Drugs and Devices
Executive Officer, Ontario Public Drug Programs

Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Program: Annual Deductible for Seniors



When you turn 65, you are automatically enrolled in the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program, meaning you will pay less for prescription drugs.

As part of this program, you will be required to pay the full cost of your prescriptions until you have fully paid the deductible for the year. You will then need to pay up to \$6.11 for every prescription filled for the remainder of the year. Your first year deductible is calculated based on what month you turn 65 (and therefore what month you join the ODB).

The benefit year begins on August 1st and runs through to July 31st of the following year. For the first year you enter the program, you pay the amount in the table to the right depending on the month you were born. The following year, you would be responsible for the full \$100 yearly deductible.

*If you qualify for the Seniors Co-payment Program, you are not required to pay the yearly deductible and only pay up to \$2.00 for every prescription filled. To find out more about the Seniors Co-Payment Program, go to ontario.ca/DrugBenefit or call 1-888-405-0405.

Month of 65th Birthday	First Year Deductible
July	\$100.00
August	\$91.67
September	\$83.33
October	\$75.00
November	\$66.67
December	\$58.33
January	\$50.00
February	\$41.67
March	\$33.33
April	\$25.00
May	\$16.67
June	\$8.33

Medication Shouldn't Be Confusing

Welcome to MedsCheck

MedsCheck is a free program that ensures the safe and appropriate use of all types of medication. And now with the expanded MedsCheck program it is even easier to manage your diabetes and prescriptions safely and properly.

MedsCheck

If you are an Ontario resident taking at least 3 prescription medications for a chronic condition, you qualify for a free consultation with a pharmacist.

MedsCheck for Ontarians living with Diabetes

If you are living with type 1 or 2 diabetes you are entitled to an annual medication assessment by a pharmacist. The consultation may include training on the use of diabetic supplies, education on medication and advice on lifestyle changes. If you are managing your diabetes without medication you also qualify.

MedsCheck for Long Term Care Home Residents

If you reside in a Long-Term Care Home a local pharmacist will complete an in-house MedsCheck consultation once every 3 months. Working with your health care team, they will review all your medications.

MedsCheck at Home

If you are unable to visit your local pharmacy – due to a physical and/or mental health condition – you may qualify for the MedsCheck at Home program, which offers one-on-one, in-home medication consultation with a local pharmacist.

For questions only, call
1-866-255-6701
or TTY 1-800-387-5559
Or visit ontario.ca/MedsCheck



Name

Date of Birth

My medication
(prescription,
over-the-counter,
vitamins and
supplements)

Describe it
(colour, shape,
size, markings
on it)

**Amount
I take**

**When I
take it/How
I take it**

**Date I started or
stopped taking
medication**

**Reason I'm
taking it**

**Who
prescribed it**

Notes

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Suggestions for Safe Medication Use

Medication tips

DO:

- ✓ Use the same pharmacy to fill your prescriptions.
- ✓ Tell your doctor/nurse practitioner/pharmacist if you experience any unexpected reactions to your medication.
- ✓ Keep all medication in its original packaging to avoid confusion.

Keep a list of all your current medication and bring the list with you to any health care appointment in case they do not have your medical record available.

DON'T:

- ✗ Share your medication.
- ✗ Change or stop taking your medication. First, talk to your pharmacist, doctor or nurse practitioner.
- ✗ Leave medication out where children can find them.
- ✗ Throw out unused or expired medication. Bring it to your pharmacy instead.

For more information about programs and services for seniors in Ontario, call: 1-888-910-1999 (TTY 1-800-387-5559)

Did you know...

- ◆ Always store medication in a cool, dry place unless otherwise directed.
- ◆ Food, drinks, smoking and even over-the-counter medication, vitamins and supplements can affect medication. Talk to your pharmacist about possible interactions.
- ◆ The same medication may come in different shapes, sizes or colours and can even have more than one name.
- ◆ Your body's ability to use certain medication can change as you get older, and some are no longer advised for people over age 65.

Tips to Get Active:

Physical Activity Tips for Adults over 65

Physical activity reduces stress, strengthens the heart and lungs, increases energy levels, helps you maintain and achieve a healthy body weight, and improves your outlook on life.

For seniors, weight-bearing physical activity reduces the rate of bone loss associated with osteoporosis. Regular physical activity also maintains strength, flexibility, balance, and coordination, and can help reduce the risk of falls.



Take part in at least 2.5 hours of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic activity each week.

- ◆ Find an activity you like such as swimming or cycling.
- ◆ Minutes count – increase your activity level 10 minutes at a time. Every little bit helps.

Spread out the activities into sessions of 10 minutes or more.

- ◆ Look for group activities or classes in your community – or encourage your family or friends to be active with you.
- ◆ Walk wherever and whenever you can

It is beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups at least twice a week. This will help your posture and balance.

- ◆ Take the stairs instead of the elevator, when possible.
- ◆ Carry your groceries home.

Moderate aerobic activity – makes you breathe harder and your heart beat faster. You should be able to talk, but not sing. *Examples:* walking quickly or bike riding.

Vigorous aerobic activity – makes your heart rate increase quite a bit and you won't be able to say more than a few words without needing to catch your breath. *Examples:* jogging or cross-country skiing.

Muscle-strengthening activity – builds up your muscles. *Examples:* climbing stairs, gardening, lifting weights, push-ups and curl-ups.

Bone-strengthening activity – your muscles push and pull against your bones, which helps make your bones stronger. *Examples:* yoga, walking and running.

Ontario and local communities offer a number of programs and services to help you get active. To find out what programs and services are available in your area, visit 211ontario.ca.

You can also find active living, health, wellness and other supports in your area through the Guide to Programs and Services for Seniors in Ontario. Access the guide at ontario.ca/SeniorsGuide or call 1-888-910-1999 to order a print copy. The guide is available in English, French and 14 other languages.

Notice to Ontarians Receiving Drugs and Pharmacy Services

This notice is to inform you that the Ministry of Health (Ministry) is making some improvements to the way your doctor and other health care providers will be able to share information with each other, in order to better deliver your care.

Is this notice for me?

This notice is for people who receive any of the following:

1. **Publicly funded drugs** (For example, seniors, children and youth aged 24 years and under, Trillium Drug Program recipients);
2. **Monitored drugs** (narcotics and controlled substances); or
3. **Publicly funded pharmacy services** (For example, MedsCheck Program, Pharmacy Smoking Cessation Program, or vaccine administration)

The Ministry will provide access to information about the publicly funded drugs and pharmacy services, and all monitored drugs you receive to your health care providers (e.g. physicians, nurse practitioners and pharmacists who are directly involved with your care). This is so they have more information about your medication and pharmacy service history to provide high quality health care to you. Health care providers are required by law to protect the privacy of your personal health information.

Can I block access to my information that would be used for health care purposes?

If you do not want any of your health care providers to see your information, you can complete a form and submit it to the Ministry.

Before making this decision, you are encouraged to consult with your health care providers about the importance of them knowing your medication and pharmacy service history to help make informed decisions about the care you receive.

If you do not contact the Ministry to block access to your information, we will consider that you have given us permission to make your information available to your health care providers.

If the Ministry has previously notified you that access to your information has been blocked, the Ministry will not give your health care providers access to your information unless you request a change.

Even if you have blocked your health care providers from accessing information about your monitored drugs for the purpose of providing health care to you, information about your monitored drugs will still be accessible to a health care provider who has actually prescribed or dispensed a monitored drug to you, or is determining whether to prescribe or dispense a monitored drug to you. For more information, please see "Public Notice Regarding the Ministry of Health's ("ministry") Collection, Use and Disclosure of Information under the *Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act, 2010*".

For more information or to obtain forms to block access to your information:

- Phone ServiceOntario INFOLine toll-free at 1-800-291-1405; TTY 1-800-387-5559;
- Visit the Ministry of Health website at ontario.ca/MyDrugInfo for more information and the most current updates.