Bring your own medicines to hospital

This leaflet explains why it is important to bring your medicines into hospital with you, and how they will be managed during your stay. Bringing your medicines in with you helps improve patient safety, reduces missed doses, and supports timely discharge. If you have any questions, please speak to a member of the nursing staff, pharmacy team, or the team responsible for your care.

Why should I bring my medicines into hospital?

Because it helps us to:

- Know exactly what medicines you take.
- Prevent missed doses, especially time-critical medicines.
- Keep you on familiar medicines during your stay.
- Make discharge quicker and safer.
- Reduce medicines related waste and protect the environment.

What should I bring?

- Prescribed or over-the-counter tablets, capsules, liquids, injections, insulins.
- Prescribed or over-the-counter inhalers, sprays, patches.
- Prescribed or over-the-counter eye, ear, or nose drops.
- Prescribed or over-the-counter creams, ointments, medicated shampoos.
- Blister packs, compliance aids e.g. dosette boxes, pill organisers.
- Herbal, vitamin or other supplement products bought over-the-counter or online.

Please bring medicines in original packaging where possible. If your medicines are at home, ask a friend or relative to bring them in.

What happens when I bring my medicines into hospital?

- We will check your medicines with you and how often you take them.
- Your medicines will be stored safely in a lockable cabinet by your bed.
- Nursing staff will give you your medicines at the right time.
- If no longer required, we can safely dispose of your medicines.

Time-critical medicines?

Some medicines must be taken on time, every time for them to be effective or because a missed dose can cause harm – these are known as time-critical medicines.

Time-critical medicines include:

- **M**ovement disorders – e.g. Parkinson's or Myasthenia medication
- **I**mmunomodulators – e.g. HIV or transplant medication
- **S**ugar – Insulin and diabetic medication
- **S**teroids – e.g. Addison's disease and adrenal insufficiency
- **E**pilepsy – Anticonvulsant medication
- **D**irect oral anticoagulants (DOACs) and warfarin

A **MISSED** dose can cause harm. This is not a complete list; the Trust keeps a Time-Critical medicines list - ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure whether your medication is time-critical.

When you are admitted to hospital, let staff know you are taking a time-critical medicine, especially if a dose is due.

Can I use my own medicines during my stay in hospital?

• Yes, where it is safe and appropriate, nursing staff will advise you to do so or support you in taking them.
• Pharmacy will arrange further supplies of your regular medicines only if required, when you are ready to go home. Please let your ward team know before you leave hospital if you require further supplies.

When you are ready to leave hospital

• Any medicines you brought from home will be returned to you. If there are medicines you are no longer taking staff will check with you before they safely dispose of them.
• If needed, we will give you an additional supply to take home with you to ensure that you have at least 7 days supply.
• Any new medicines started in hospital will be supplied to you. This will allow time for your GP to receive the discharge letter with updated information about your medicines.
• With your consent, we will inform your community pharmacy about changes to your medicines so they have the correct information when you leave the hospital.
• Before you leave, staff will explain what medicines to take and how to take them. You can request written information about your medicines too.

At home

• Only order what you need from your GP and community pharmacy.
• Avoid stockpiling and return unused medicines to your community pharmacy for safe disposal.

Sources of information

Further information can be obtained from:

- Pharmacy Department, Conquest Hospital, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust Tel: 0300 131 5184
- Pharmacy Department, Eastbourne District General Hospital, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust Tel: 0300 131 5636
- NHS 111
- Your GP
- Your Local Pharmacy

Important information

This patient information is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: 0300 131 4784 or by email at: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: 0300 131 4434 Email: esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

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Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:
Medicines Optimisation Group (October 2026)

The Clinical Specialty/Unit that have agreed this patient information leaflet:
Medicines Optimisation Group (October 2026)
Core Services Division (November 2026)

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Responsible clinician/author: Jane Starr Medication Safety Officer

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