



National Pharmacare in PEI

Questions and Answers for PEI Residents

May 2025

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In partnership with the Government of Canada, the National Pharmacare Program provides coverage for many diabetes medications and contraceptives and expands access to blood glucose test strips as of May 1, 2025.

Who is eligible?

You are eligible for the program if you:

- are a PEI resident as defined by the Drug Cost Assistance Act; and
- have a valid PEI Health Card; and
- your medication is included in the list of drugs covered by the National Pharmacare Program.

Individuals enrolled in a federal drug benefit plan (i.e. Non-Insured Health Benefit Plan, the Canadian Armed Forces, Veterans Affairs Canada, Correction Service Canada or Interim Federal Health Program) will continue to receive coverage from that plan.

Where can I get my medication?

You can have your prescription filled at any community retail pharmacy located in Prince Edward Island.

I have private insurance. Will I still get coverage with the National Pharmacare Program?

Yes, PEI residents with private insurance are still eligible for the National Pharmacare Program. The costs of contraceptives and diabetes medications included in the National Pharmacare Program will be paid publicly. This means you won't need to coordinate benefits for covered products with your private insurance plans (exception: blood glucose test strips, see Diabetes section below for more details).

How much will I have to pay for my medication?

Medications included in the National Pharmacare Program will be available at no cost (with the exception of blood glucose test strips). Some medications in the National Pharmacare Program are approved on a **special authorization** basis only. Please refer to the [PEI Pharmacare Formulary](#) for more information about special authorization criteria.

If your medication is not included in the National Pharmacare Program list of drugs, it will not be eligible for coverage through the National Pharmacare Program.

Diabetes medications and contraceptives that are not included in the National Pharmacare Program drug list but are currently included in the PEI Pharmacare Formulary will continue to be available through PEI Pharmacare drug programs.

I am travelling, can I get a travel supply?

Yes, you are eligible to receive up to a 180-day travel supply of medications covered under the National Pharmacare Program. Medications for your travel supply must be filled in a PEI community pharmacy prior to your travel. You will be required to provide your community pharmacy with advanced notice of your travel dates and complete the [out of province travel declaration.pdf](#)

I have a PEI health card. Will I be able to get coverage from the National Pharmacare Program if I am not in PEI?

Your medications will not be eligible for coverage if they are filled at an out-of-province pharmacy.

If you take up residency elsewhere, your eligibility for this program will end the day you leave PEI. If you relocate to another Canadian province which has a National Pharmacare Program, you must meet the eligibility criteria for that province.

PEI residents who are attending school at an out of province educational facility (i.e. university / college etc..) would need to have their prescriptions filled by a PEI community pharmacy to receive the benefits under the National Pharmacare Program.

Where can I find out more information about the National Pharmacare Program?

Visit our [website](https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/NationalPharmacareProgram) - <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/NationalPharmacareProgram>.

CONTRACEPTION

What types of contraceptives are covered under the National Pharmacare Program?

See **Appendix A** for the list of contraceptives that are covered by the National Pharmacare Program. The program covers some oral contraceptives (i.e. birth control medication), hormonal intrauterine devices (IUD), copper IUDs, contraceptive implants, contraceptive injections, vaginal rings, and emergency contraceptives.

Are generic and brand name contraceptives covered under the program?

The full cost of generic contraceptives listed in **Appendix A** is covered under the program. If a person chooses to access a brand name medication where there is a generic product available, they will be responsible for paying the difference in cost between the brand name medication and price paid by the government for the least expensive generic medication.

Are non-hormonal contraceptives like condoms, cervical caps, diaphragms, and sponges covered?

No, non-hormonal contraceptives, such as condoms, cervical caps, diaphragms, and sponges are not covered under the National Pharmacare Program. Copper IUDs (a non-hormonal contraceptive) are available at no cost with a prescription through the National Pharmacare Program.

Do I need a prescription to get contraceptives like birth control medications and IUDs?

Yes, you need a prescription for contraceptives like oral contraceptives (i.e. birth control medication), IUDs, contraceptive implants, contraceptive injections, vaginal rings, and emergency contraceptives.

How do I get a prescription for a contraceptive?

Many healthcare providers can give advice and prescriptions for contraceptives to help you choose the best method for your needs. This includes family physicians, nurse practitioners, obstetricians, gynecologists, midwives, and pharmacists.

Pharmacists can prescribe contraceptive pills, vaginal rings, contraceptive patches, and contraceptive injections. They cannot prescribe long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs), like IUDs or contraceptive implants. You need a prescription for a LARC from a doctor, nurse practitioner or midwife.

You will also need a medical professional to insert a LARC into your body. On PEI, LARC insertions are done by individual providers (like family doctors, nurse practitioners, and OBGYNs) or at clinics (like SHORS and post-

secondary health clinics).

Where can I go to get contraceptives if I do not have a primary care provider?

People without a primary care provider can get prescriptions for contraceptives from:

- Walk-in clinics;
- Virtual care (Maple);
- Health clinics at post-secondary education campuses (for students and staff);
- Pharmacists (able to prescribe some forms of contraceptives); and
- Sexual Health, Options & Reproductive Services (SHORS).

Once you have the prescription, you can go to a pharmacy to get the contraceptive. If you have been prescribed an IUD or implant, you will need to make a follow-up appointment with a health care provider to insert it.

Where can I access information on contraceptive options, including their uses, benefits, and potential side effects?

You can access information on contraceptive options, including their uses, benefits, and potential side effects, through the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada (SOGC) website and resources. SOGC's [Sex & U website](#), as well as [It's a Plan online tool](#), provides comprehensive information on various contraception options.

DIABETES

What types of diabetes medications are covered under the National Pharmacare Program?

See **Appendix B** for a list of diabetes medications that are covered by the National Pharmacare Program.

Are generic and brand name diabetes medications covered under the program?

The full cost of generic diabetes medications listed in **Appendix B** is covered under the program. If you choose to access a brand name medication where there is a generic product available, you will be responsible for paying the difference in cost between the brand name medication and price paid by the government for the least expensive generic medication.

Will insulin pen needles be covered?

The National Pharmacare Program in Prince Edward Island does not cover the cost of insulin syringes or insulin pen needles.

Are blood glucose test strips covered?

As part of the National Pharmacare Program, Island residents taking non-insulin diabetes medications for diabetes can now receive coverage for blood glucose test strips.

To qualify for coverage of blood glucose test strips, you must be enrolled in the PEI Pharmacare [Diabetes Drug Program](#).

Under the current co-pay schedule for the Provincial Diabetes Drug Program, you will pay the following:

- \$11.00 per dispense for 100 test strips
 - If you are taking insulin, you can access 100 test strips up to every 25 days
 - If you are taking a non-insulin diabetes medication that has a lower risk of causing hypoglycemia (low-blood sugar), you can access a maximum of 200 strips annually.
 - If you are taking a non-insulin diabetes medication that has a higher risk of causing hypoglycemia

(low blood sugars) (i.e. a sulfonylurea (glyburide, gliclazide, glimepiride) or repaglinide), you can access a maximum of 300 strips annually.

Private health insurance, where applicable, will reduce the co-pay for test strips (see next question). Please see the [Diabetes Drug Program](#) information page for additional details about this program.

Do I need a prescription for blood glucose test strips?

You do not need a prescription to receive blood glucose test strips, for the \$11 co-pay; however, if you have private health insurance, a prescription may be required to submit to your insurance provider, thereby reducing your co-pay to \$2.20 or less (depending on your health insurance plan).

Can I get a 90-day supply?

You will not be eligible to receive a 90-day supply for blood glucose test strips, insulin or any drug approved through Special Authorization. These products are limited to a 30-day supply at a time.

If deemed appropriate by your health care provider, other diabetes medications are permitted to be dispensed as a 90-day supply in the National Pharmacare Program.

Does the National Pharmacare Program change the criteria or coverage for the Insulin Pump Program or the Glucose Sensor Program?

No, the criteria and coverage under the PEI Insulin Pump Program and the Glucose Sensor Program remain unchanged under the National Pharmacare Program, ensuring continued support for those who rely on these essential services. Information regarding these programs can be found at the following websites <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/insulin-pump-program> and <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/glucose-sensor-program>.

APPENDIX A – CONTRACEPTIVES COVERED IN NATIONAL PHARMACARE

If a person chooses to access a brand name medication where there is a generic product available, they will be responsible for paying the difference in cost between the brand name medication and price paid by the government for the least expensive generic medication.

Drug/related product categories (active ingredient)	Conditions of coverage (Open benefit unless otherwise specified)
Levonorgestrel and ethinylestradiol (<i>Alesse</i> , <i>Min-Ovral</i> and generics)	If requesting brand name <i>Alesse</i> or <i>Min-Ovral</i> , residents may be responsible for a portion of costs; other listed levonorgestrel and ethinylestradiol products are available at zero cost.
Desogestrel and ethinylestradiol (<i>Marvelon</i> and generics)	If requesting brand name <i>Marvelon</i> , residents may be responsible for a portion of costs; other listed desogestrel and ethinylestradiol products are available at zero cost.
Drospirenone and ethinylestradiol (<i>Yasmin</i> and generics)	If requesting brand name <i>Yasmin</i> , residents may be responsible for a portion of costs; other listed drospirenone and ethinylestradiol products are available at zero cost.
Norethisterone and ethinylestradiol	
Levonorgestrel and ethinylestradiol	
Norethisterone and ethinylestradiol	
Norgestimate and ethinylestradiol	
Norethisterone	
Medroxyprogesterone (<i>Depo-Provera</i>)	
Etonogestrel	
Levonorgestrel (<i>Plan B</i> and generic)	If requesting brand name <i>Plan B</i> , residents may be responsible for a portion of the cost; other listed levonorgestrel products are available at zero cost.
Plastic IUD with copper	
Plastic IUD with progestogen	
Vaginal ring with progestogen and estrogen (<i>NuvaRing</i> and generic)	If requesting brand name <i>NuvaRing</i> , residents may be responsible for a portion of the cost; other listed vaginal rings with progestogen and estrogen products are available at zero cost.

APPENDIX B – DIABETES MEDICATIONS COVERED IN NATIONAL PHARMACARE

If a person chooses to access a brand name medication where there is a generic product available, they will be responsible for paying the difference in cost between the brand name medication and price paid by the government for the least expensive generic medication.

Drug/related product categories (active ingredient)	Conditions of coverage (Open benefit unless otherwise specified)
Fast-acting insulin (<i>Humulin-R, Novolin GE Toronto, Entuzity</i>)	Special authorization access For <i>Entuzity</i>
Rapid-acting insulin lispro (<i>Admelog</i>)	
Rapid-acting insulin aspart (<i>Kirsty, Trurapi</i>)	
Rapid-acting insulin glulisine (<i>Apidra</i>)	
Intermediate-acting insulin (<i>Humulin-N, Novolin GE NPH</i>)	
Intermediate combined with fast-acting insulin (<i>Humulin 30/70, Novolin GE 30/70, Humalog Mix 25</i>)	
Intermediate combined with rapid-acting insulin (<i>Humalog Mix 25</i>)	
Long-acting basal insulin glargine (<i>Basaglar, Semglee, Toujeo solostar, Toujeo doublestar</i>)	Special authorization access for <i>Toujeo SoloSTAR</i> and <i>Toujeo DoubleSTAR</i>
Long-acting basal insulin detemir (<i>Levemir</i>)	Special authorization access
Long-acting basal insulin degludec (<i>Tresiba</i>)	
Metformin (<i>Glucophage</i> and generics)	If requesting brand name <i>Glucophage</i> , residents may be responsible for a portion of the cost; other listed metformin products are available at zero cost.
Glyburide	
Gliclazide (<i>Diamicron MR</i> and generics)	If requesting brand name <i>Diamicron MR</i> , residents may be responsible for a portion of the cost; other listed gliclazide products are available at zero cost.
Saxagliptin and metformin (<i>Komboglyze</i>)	
Empagliflozin and metformin (<i>Synjardy</i>)	
Linagliptin and metformin (<i>Jentadueto</i>)	
Dapagliflozin (<i>Forxiga</i> and generics)	If requesting brand name <i>Forxiga</i> , residents may be responsible for a portion of the cost; other listed dapagliflozin products are available at zero cost.