

## What needs to be considered involving medication?

- » The pharmacy team is available to answer your questions about medication and will explain to you how to use it.
- » If you want to buy non-prescription medication, the staff at the pharmacy may advise you to visit a doctor. This is for your own safety. The reason for this is that you may have a disease that must be treated by a doctor.
- » Most of the medication manufactured in Germany is industrially produced. In special cases, the pharmacy produces medication for individual patients.
- » Each industrially produced medication comes with a package insert that contains information about its use. If the insert mentions a side-effect, for example, this does not mean that you will definitely suffer from this side effect. If necessary, the team at the pharmacy will explain to you some of the important information on the package insert.
- » In individual cases, the pharmacist may refuse to dispense a medication.
- » Not all medication is halal. For instance, some medication contains gelatine, which is obtained from the tissue of pigs. The pharmacy team will be able to answer any questions you may have.

- » Store medication in such a way that it cannot be accidentally consumed by children.
- » Each medication package has a date printed on it; the medication may be used until that date. If the date has expired, dispose of the medication with your household waste. Medication may not be disposed of in a toilet or sink. This also applies to liquid medications such as cough syrup.



### Contact

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INFORMATION FOR MIGRANTS  
**Medication in Germany**

## Where do you get medication?

Refugees who have resided in Germany as asylum seekers for 15 months are always members of a health insurance provider. They may obtain their medication from pharmacies. The following information applies to this group of migrants.

Refugees who have been in Germany for less than 15 months shall generally receive medication from the competent authorities.

Apart from a small number of exceptions, in Germany medication is dispensed by pharmacies; you cannot get it in other shops or from the doctor's office.



There are about 20,000 pharmacies in Germany. A pharmacy can be **identified** from the outside **by the red letter A**. Every pharmacy is managed by a pharmacist.

Pharmacies offer comprehensive **out-of-hours and emergency service**. However, not every pharmacy is open around the clock. At night and on Sundays, you can find the nearest open pharmacy at [www.aponet.de](http://www.aponet.de). You can also download the free “pharmacy finder” app.

## What do the terms “rezeptpflichtig (prescription-only)” and “apothekenpflichtig (pharmacy only)” mean?

There are several types of medication.

You can get **prescription-only (rezeptpflichtig) medication** only if you have a prescription from a doctor. The prescription may come in different colours, such as pink.

The image shows a pink prescription form with the following fields and sections:

- Krankenkasse bzw. Kostenträger:** Health insurance provider.
- Name, Vorname des Versicherten:** Patient's name and first name.
- geb. am:** Date of birth.
- Kassen-Nr., Versicherten-Nr., Status:** Insurance details.
- Betriebsstätten-Nr., Arzt-Nr., Datum:** Pharmacy and doctor information.
- Abgabedatum in der Apotheke:** Date of dispensing.
- Unterschrift des Arztes (Muster 16 / 2008):** Doctor's signature.
- Bei Arbeitsunfall auszufüllen:** Section for occupational accidents.
- Unfalltag, Unfallbetrieb oder Arbeitgebernummer:** Details of the occupational accident.

If you take your prescription to a pharmacy, you will get the medication that was prescribed by the doctor. Prescription-only medication includes medication for high blood pressure or diabetes and all antibiotics for bacterial infections.

If the pharmacy does not have the medication prescribed by a doctor in stock, the pharmacy can generally obtain the medication for you within a few hours.

**Non-prescription medication** is available from the pharmacy without a prescription, which means you do not have to see a doctor first. Non-prescription medication includes cold remedies and many pain medicines.

## What does medication cost?

The prices of **prescription-only medication** are prescribed by law and are the same in all German pharmacies.

How much you have to pay for a prescription-only medication depends on the individual case. In many cases, this medication is free for refugees. If a medication is not free, you generally only pay some of the costs. This is called co-payment, or “Zuzahlung” in German. The remaining costs are covered by the health insurance or the social welfare office.

If your income is very low you may be exempt from the co-payment. In this case, prescription-only medication will be free for you. You may apply for the exemption with your health insurance provider.

You have to pay for **non-prescription medication** in full at the pharmacy. Exception: If your doctor has prescribed a non-prescription medication for a child under the age of 12 (or for a young person with a developmental disorder under the age of 18), the health insurance provider shall also pay for it.