



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH BENEFITS

Pharmacy

First Nations Health Benefits (FNHB) provides coverage for medications and certain pharmacy items and services. Prescription medications are one part of a client's wellness journey.

What is covered?

FNHB covers items from the following categories:

- ✓ Prescription drugs
- ✓ Non-drug OTC items (e.g., lancets for diabetic use)
- ✓ Over-the-counter (OTC) drugs

The pharmacy benefit is delivered through partnerships between First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), BC PharmaCare, the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program (NIHB), and multiple provincial agencies (e.g., BC Cancer, BC Transplant, the BC Renal Agency, and the BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS). Clients may require a drug not normally covered or only partially covered. In some cases, a prescriber (e.g., doctor or nurse practitioner) can apply for Special Authority through PharmaCare to request coverage for these items. Special Authority must be approved before the prescription is filled—coverage cannot be provided retroactively. For a full description of the pharmacy benefit, please visit www.fnha.ca/benefits

Exclusions

Examples of pharmacy items or medications that will not be covered include:

- Alternative therapies (e.g., glucosamine and evening primrose oil)
- Fees for writing prescriptions or forms
- Vaccinations for travel

Most pharmacy items are fully covered. If you are asked to pay for your medication, ask your pharmacist:

- What are my options to get coverage for this medication?
- Can the pharmacist recommend an alternative covered by Plan W?
- If the medication is not covered under PharmaCare, has the pharmacist billed the FNHA-NIHB formulary?

If you have any questions about the Pharmacy benefit or need support to navigate the system, contact Health Benefits at:

1-855-550-5454 (toll-free)

Accessing Pharmacy Benefits

FEBRUARY 2019

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- Client visits a prescriber (e.g., physician, nurse practitioner, or midwife) and is given a prescription for a medication or over-the-counter (OTC) item.
- If the prescribed item requires Special Authority for coverage or is not on the Plan W formulary, the prescriber may apply for Special Authority coverage before the client fills the prescription.

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- Client takes their prescription to a local pharmacy.
- Some OTC medications and items (e.g., laxatives, children's multivitamins) can be covered when treatment is recommended and documented by the pharmacist. These medications do not require a prescription.

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- Pharmacist fills the prescription or OTC item and processes payment through one of the FNHB formularies. All prescriptions should be first billed through Plan W (or other applicable PharmaCare plans) and then the FNHA-NIHB formulary if necessary.

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- Client receives medication or OTC item.
- The pharmacist is available to provide training on healthy medication use or answer any questions the client may have, such as correct dosing, number of refills prescribed and possible side-effects of the medication.
- If coverage of the medication is through a Special Authority, the client and the pharmacist should discuss any expiry date for the Special Authority.