

Medications and pharmacy items

Information for workers

The Victorian WorkCover Authority (operating as WorkSafe Victoria) can pay for the reasonable costs of medications and other pharmacy items that you need for your work-related injury or illness, provided they meet the pharmacy policy requirements.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

The Australian Government's Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) has been integral to maintaining the health and wellbeing of Australians by ensuring access to high quality, affordable medications.

All workers with a Medicare card are eligible for PBS listed medications and associated concession and safety net entitlements. Your medical practitioner or dentist should prescribe your medications through the PBS when clinically appropriate and available.

More information about your eligibility for the PBS can be found at www.medicareaustralia.gov.au or worksafe.vic.gov.au

What medications WorkSafe will pay for

WorkSafe can pay the reasonable costs of medications that are:

	requested by a medical practitioner or dentist
	provided by a registered pharmacist
	provided in line with the PBS, where clinically appropriate and available, and
	registered (not listed) in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods.

Medications and pharmacy items

What medications WorkSafe cannot pay for

WorkSafe cannot pay for medications that:

✗	are for injuries or illnesses other than your work-related injury or illness
✗	are requested by someone other than a medical practitioner or dentist
✗	are provided by someone other than a registered pharmacist
✗	are provided at an unreasonable cost
✗	are prescribed as part of a clinical trial
✗	you needed before your work-related injury or illness
✗	fail to meet our invoicing requirements.

Complementary and over the counter medications

Complementary medications include vitamins, minerals, herbal remedies and nutritional supplements. Over the counter items are those sold by a pharmacist without a prescription and include an active ingredient e.g. analgesics and laxatives.

WorkSafe can pay for the reasonable costs of complementary and over the counter medications that you need for your work-related injury or illness and are:

- registered (not listed) in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods
- supplied by a registered pharmacist, and
- supported by a letter from your medical practitioner or dentist explaining why you need the item.

More information about the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods can be found at www.tga.gov.au or worksafe.vic.gov.au

Other pharmacy items

WorkSafe can pay for the reasonable costs of non-drug pharmacy items (e.g. bandages) that:

- you need for your work-related injury or illness
- are supplied by a registered pharmacist, and
- are supported by a letter from your medical practitioner or dentist explaining why you need the item.

Policies on specific medications

WorkSafe has policies on specific medications which were developed in line with community standards and current best practice, including policies on:

- drugs of addiction known as Schedule 8 medication
- erectile dysfunction medications
- glucosamine, and
- topical non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) creams and gels (e.g. Voltaren Emulgel).

More information on specific medication policies can be found at worksafe.vic.gov.au

Medications and pharmacy items

Restrictions on the supply of medications

Due to the risks associated with certain types and quantities of medications, WorkSafe has placed restrictions on the funding and supply of:

- drugs of addiction known as Schedule 8 medication that are not listed on the PBS or not prescribed through the PBS
- medication supplied in quantities exceeding the manufacturer's maximum therapeutic dose, and
- bulk supply of a medication e.g. for overseas travel.

In these circumstances your medical practitioner or dentist must provide your Agent with a letter explaining why you need the medication before prescribing it. The Agent will review this information and let you know whether or not they will pay for the medication.

How medications and pharmacy items are paid

WorkSafe can reimburse payments for medications and pharmacy items that you need for your work-related injury or illness, provided they meet the pharmacy policy requirements.

WorkSafe prefers that your pharmacist invoices your employer or Agent directly. You need to make sure that your pharmacist has:

- your claim number
- Agent and employer details, and
- a supporting letter from your medical practitioner or dentist which explains the direct relationship between any complementary, over the counter or non-drug pharmacy items, and your work-related injury or illness.

You should advise your pharmacist if the Agent managing your claim changes.

If you pay for your own medications and pharmacy items for your work-related injury or illness, you can seek reimbursement from your employer or Agent. All pharmacy accounts you submit for reimbursement must include:

- your name, address and claim number
- a fully itemised receipt showing the pharmacist's name and address, the date of purchase, a description of the item and total amount paid, and
- for all medications, the details of the name of the medication, the strength and quantity and if on prescription, whether it is a PBS item or non-PBS (private) item.

Your pharmacy receipt should already contain the information required. However, you may wish to confirm this with your pharmacist.

You should confirm with your pharmacist that you have been charged for medications and pharmacy items in line with the pharmacy policy.

You should send accounts and receipts to your employer or Agent as soon as possible, or at least within six months of the date of supply. It is recommended you retain copies of all receipts and prescriptions for your own records.

Medications and pharmacy items

If you disagree with a decision

If you disagree with a decision made about your medication or pharmacy items, you are encouraged to talk to your medical practitioner to discuss your needs.

If this doesn't help to resolve your issue, there are a range of people you can contact:

- Your Agent.
- The WorkSafe Advisory Service on freecall 1800 136 089 or (03) 9641 1444 or email info@worksafe.vic.gov.au
- The Accident Compensation Conciliation Service (ACCS). This is a free, independent service that can help resolve your dispute without a solicitor or going to court. For more information or to get a *Request for Conciliation* form, call the ACCS on freecall 1800 635 960 or (03) 9940 1111 or visit www.conciliation.vic.gov.au

To get assistance

For assistance with disputed claims and the ACCS you can contact:

- Your union.
- Union Assist. This is a free service set up and run by the Victorian Trades Hall Council. For more information go to www.vthc.org.au or call (03) 9639 6144.
- WorkCover Assist. This is a free service provided by WorkSafe to help you if you have a problem with your claim. Call (03) 9941 0537.

Need more information?

Contact the WorkSafe Advisory Service on freecall 1800 136 089 or (03) 9641 1444, email info@worksafe.vic.gov.au or visit worksafe.vic.gov.au

For information about WorkSafe in your own language, call our *Talking your Language* service

廣東話	1300 559 141	Italiano	1300 660 210	Español	1300 724 101	العربية	1300 554 987
Ελληνικά	1300 650 535	普通话	1300 662 373	Türkçe	1300 725 445	English	1300 782 442
Македонски	1300 661 494	Српски	1300 722 595	Việt Ngữ	1300 781 868	Other	1300 782 343

The information contained in this publication is protected by copyright. WorkSafe encourages free transfer, copying and printing of the information in this guidance material if such activities support the purpose for which this guidance material was intended.

WorkSafe Victoria

WorkSafe Advisory Service

222 Exhibition Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Phone (03) 9641 1444
Freecall 1800 136 089

Fax (03) 9641 1353
Web worksafe.vic.gov.au