

# Frequently Asked Question for Patients

Effective January 1, 2025, dialysis patients covered by Medicare must get phosphate binders directly from their dialysis provider. At Northwest Kidney Centers, this means that Medicare patient prescriptions for phosphate binders must be sent to and filled by the Northwest Kidney Centers Pharmacy.

**Q:** How do I know if this change impacts me?

- If you have Medicare as your primary insurance coverage you will need to fill your prescription for phosphate binders through the Northwest Kidney Centers pharmacy. Check with your insurance provider if you are unclear what your plan covers.

**Q:** If I have Medicare AND another insurance (Medicaid, commercial insurance) will this change impact me?

- Medicare is generally considered the primary insurer, so you will need to have your prescriptions for phosphate binders sent to the Northwest Kidney Centers pharmacy. Commercial insurance plans may have different coverage benefits so it is recommended you check with your insurance provider to understand your specific benefit plan.

**Q:** If I have a VA Plan (TriWest) how will this change impact me?

- This change does not impact patients insured under a VA Plan. Continue to have prescriptions for your phosphate binder filled at the pharmacy you currently use.

**Q:** Which medications are impacted by this change?

- Sevelamer carbonate (Renvela)
- Sevelamer hydrochloride (Renagel)
- Calcium Acetate (Phoslo)
- Sucroferric oxyhydroxide (Velphoro)
- Lanthanum carbonate (Fosrenol)
- Ferric Citrate (Auryxia)

- Tenapanor (Xphozah) – see below for additional information

**Q:** Will TUMS (Calcium Carbonate) be covered by Medicare/insurance?

- TUMS is not covered by Medicare but is covered by Medicaid. If you have Medicaid or are dual-eligible for Medicare and Medicaid, TUMS is covered. If TUMS is not covered for you, it is available over the counter at the Northwest Kidney Centers pharmacy. As of Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>, the price was \$3.00 for 150 tablets.

**Q:** Do I need to change my medication?

- If you currently take Tenapanor, you may need to consult with your doctor about alternative options. Due to supply restrictions, Tenapanor will not be available at the Northwest Kidney Centers Pharmacy.

**Q:** If I am on more than one phosphate binder, will both medications be covered by Medicare/insurance?

- Yes, for patients who require and are prescribed 2 (two) different phosphate binders by their provider to take simultaneously, Northwest Kidney Centers pharmacy will provide both.

**Q:** Can I get a 90-day supply of my phosphate binding medication?

- Due to Medicare regulations, we can only fill a 30-day supply of your medication at one time for patients insured by Medicare.

**Q:** Will the cost of my binders change?

You should not see an increase in cost but can call the Member Services number on the back of your insurance card to verify exact costs.**Q:** What impact will this have on my co-pays?

- If your plan has a co-pay requirement, that is the amount due at the time of service. Please contact your provider directly with questions regarding your specific coverage plan or visit [Costs | Medicare](#).

**Q:** How do I ensure my current prescription will be filled by Northwest Kidney Centers?

- Ask your nephrologist to send a new prescription for phosphate binders to the Northwest Kidney Centers pharmacy when you next

refill your prescription. We are recommending that prescriptions be sent to Northwest Kidney Centers by Dec. 30, 2024.

**Q:** How do I refill prescriptions with Northwest Kidney Centers?

- There are four easy ways to fill and refill prescriptions at Northwest Kidney Centers:
  1. Use the order form on our website  
(<https://www.nwkidney.org/refill-a-prescription/>)
  2. Email [pharmacy@nwkidney.org](mailto:pharmacy@nwkidney.org)
  3. Patients can also contact us by phone or fax:
    - Voicemail refill line: 206-343-4125, available 24 hours a day
    - Fax: 206-343-4884
  4. Stop by our pharmacy walk-up window to fill prescriptions or talk in person with one of our specialized pharmacists. Our pharmacy is currently located at 700 Broadway, Seattle, WA 98122

For general pharmacy questions, phone a pharmacist: 206-343-4870 or 1-800-947-8902

**Q:** How do I get my prescription from Northwest Kidney Centers?

- If you dialyze at one of our clinics, your medications can be delivered directly to your clinic. You may also pick-up your prescription at our pharmacy walk-up window located at 700 Broadway, Seattle, 98122.
- If you currently live in a skilled nursing facility, your medications will be mailed to that facility.
- If you dialyze at home, your medications will be mailed to your home.

**Q:** Who do I talk to if I have additional questions?

- Talk to your dietitian.