

Cheaper Medicines

PBS co-payment freeze – Patient FAQs



From 1 January 2025, the Australian Government introduced a freeze on the maximum patient cost of all Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines. This ensures you can keep accessing affordable medicines.

What is the PBS co-payment freeze?

The maximum price that a pharmacy can charge for a PBS medicine is set by the Australian Government and is called the PBS patient co-payment, which usually increases every year with inflation. Since 1 January 2025 the maximum patient cost for a PBS medicine has been frozen at the 2024 amount to encourage people not to delay filling their prescriptions due to cost.

- For Medicare cardholders, the maximum patient co-payment for PBS medicines will stay at \$31.60 for 2025, which is the same rate as it was in 2024.
- For Commonwealth concession cardholders, the maximum patient co-payment will stay at \$7.70 until 2030. This means the patient co-payment will not increase with indexation for five years.

What medicines are covered by the freeze?

The freeze applies to the patient co-payment amount for all prescription medicines listed on the PBS. This means that patients will not pay more than the current amount for their medicines and that this cost will not increase due to indexation.

More information

For more details on the PBS co-payment freeze or how it may benefit you and your family, visit health.gov.au/cheapermedicines

Standard pricing variations may still apply between generic and brand-name options. Prices for medicines may also vary where the cost is less than the PBS patient-co-payment amount of \$31.60, or \$7.70 for concession cardholders.

Why is the price of some medicines different at some pharmacies?

Although the PBS patient co-payment has been frozen, prices for different brands of the same medicine may vary. Talk to your pharmacist about different brand options and consider generic medicines as a way to manage out-of-pocket expenses.

For medicines that cost less than the PBS patient co-payment, pharmacies decide how much to charge, so prices can vary depending on where you go to fill your prescription.

Have the PBS Safety Net thresholds changed?

The PBS Safety Net threshold for general patients increased to \$1694 from 1 January 2025. The threshold for concession cardholders has stayed the same.

You can continue tracking your PBS expenses using the PBS Safety Net record to see if you qualify for additional benefits.

