March 26, 2020: Important update regarding the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic

Health Canada has issued practitioners and pharmacists a temporary Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) subsection 56(1) class exemption from the provisions of:

- Subsection 31(1), and section 37 of the Narcotic Control Regulations (NCR)
- Sections G.03.002 and G.03.006 of Part G of the Food and Drug Regulations (FDR)
- Paragraphs 52 (c) and (d), subsection 54(1) of the Benzodiazepines and Other Targeted Substances Regulations.

While this exemption is in effect:

- Pharmacists may dispense any narcotic pursuant to a written or verbal order from a practitioner
- Pharmacists may dispense a refill of a previous narcotic or controlled drug prescription pursuant to a written or verbal order from a practitioner
- Pharmacists may transfer prescriptions of narcotics and controlled drugs to another pharmacist in Ontario and if they have already been transferred, may be transferred to another pharmacist
- Prescriptions for a benzodiazepine or other targeted substance that have already been transferred, may be transferred to another pharmacist

Refer to the Health Canada’s Subsection 56(1) Class Exemption for Patients, Practitioners and Pharmacists Prescribing and Providing Controlled Substances in Canada during the Coronavirus Pandemic and related Frequently Asked Questions for further information.

OCP practice tools affected by the CDSA exemption have been updated. Please refer to the OCP website for the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) for Pharmacy Professionals webpage.
### Narcotic Drugs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drugs listed in the Schedule to the Narcotic Control Regulations</td>
<td>Narcotic Drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All combinations containing only 1 narcotic (straight narcotics)</td>
<td>All narcotic compounds containing 1 narcotic for parenteral use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All combinations containing 2 or more narcotics</td>
<td>All narcotic compounds containing more than 2 other non-narcotic ingredients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All products containing any of the following 5 narcotics: oxycodone, methadone, morphine, diacetylmorphine (heroin), fentanyl</td>
<td>At narcotic (straight narcotics)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Narcotic Preparations

**Exempted Codeine Preparations:**

- Exempted Codeine Preparations: (E.g. AC&C, Mersyndol®, Tylenol® No. 2, Robaxacet-8®-C, Dimetane Expectorant C®-C, Robitussin AC® No.3, Mersyndol ®, Mersyndol® No. 3, Robitussin AC® No. 2, Mersyndol®-C, Tylenol®-C, etc.)

### Controlled Drugs

**Controlled Drug Register:**

- Controlled Drugs (Part I) (Currently none available in Canada)

**Controlled Drug Sales Records:**

- Purchase & Sales Records:
  - Maintain in the Narcotic and Controlled Drug Register, as required by Section 56 of the Narcotic Control Regulations. Must be readily available for at least 2 years.

**Dispensing Record Requirements:**

- Written or faxed prescription only when dispensed pursuant to a prescription.
- Verbal prescriptions may be accepted and dispensed with the direct supervision of a pharmacist.
- The signature of the person dispensing the prescription (pharmacist and pharmacy technician (if applicable) dispensing the prescription) must be readily available for auditing purposes.

**Dispensing Record Requirements:**

- Written, faxed or verbal prescription.

**Dispensing Record:**

- Date of dispensing
- Identification number of prescription
- Name and address of prescriber
- Name and address of patient
- Prescription Sales Records:
  - Same as above

**Prescription Sales Records:**

- Not a requirement

**Purchase Records:**

- Same as above

**Prescription Requirements:**

- Written or faxed prescription only when dispensed pursuant to a prescription.
- Verbal prescriptions may be accepted and dispensed with the direct supervision of a pharmacist.
- The signature of the person dispensing the prescription (pharmacist and pharmacy technician (if applicable) dispensing the prescription) must be readily available for auditing purposes.

**Dispensing Record Requirements:**

- Written, faxed or verbal prescription.

**Dispensing Record:**

- Date of dispensing
- Identification number of prescription
- Name and address of prescriber
- Name and address of patient
- Prescription Sales Records:
  - Same as above

**Prescription Sales Records:**

- Not a requirement

**Purchase Records:**

- Same as above

**Refills & Transfers:**

- No refills permitted if written or verbal prescription.
- Part-fills and logged prescriptions may be dispensed as a total quantity (part-fill quantities).

**Dispensing Record Requirements:**

- Written, faxed or verbal prescription.

**Dispensing Record:**

- Date of dispensing
- Identification number of prescription
- Name and address of prescriber
- Name and address of patient
- Prescription Sales Records:
  - Same as above

**Prescription Sales Records:**

- Not a requirement

**Purchase Records:**

- Same as above

**Refills & Transfers:**

- No refills permitted if written or verbal prescription.
- Part-fills and logged prescriptions may be dispensed as a total quantity (part-fill quantities).
# PRESCRIPTION REGULATION SUMMARY CHART

*The Health Canada s.56 exemptions are not reflected in the chart below. Please see the note on page 1.*

*Section 56 exemptions expire on the earliest of September 30, 2020, the date it is replaced by another exemption, or the date on which it is revoked.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Prescription Requirements</th>
<th>Refills &amp; Transfers</th>
<th>Purchase &amp; Sales Records</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Controlled Drugs Part II</td>
<td>E.g. Butorphanol, most barbiturates (e.g. phenobarbital)</td>
<td>Written, faxed or verbal prescription. Verbal prescriptions may be accepted and recorded by a pharmacist, or by an intern or registered pharmacy student under direct supervision of a pharmacist.</td>
<td>Refills permitted if the prescriber has directed, at the time the prescription is issued, the number of refills and dates for, or intervals between refills.</td>
<td>Purchase Records: Maintain in the Narcotic and Controlled Drug Register, as invoices filed in chronological order, or in other record for such purposes; must be readily available for auditing purposes for at least 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drug Preparations Part II</td>
<td></td>
<td>May be prescribed as a total quantity to be dispensed in divided portions (part-fill quantities)</td>
<td>Purchase Records: Same as above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E.g. Bellergal Spacetabs®, Tecnal®</td>
<td></td>
<td>Transfers are not permitted, including part-fills and logged prescriptions.</td>
<td>Purchase Sales Records: Not a requirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled Drugs Part III</td>
<td>Anabolic Steroids and Derivatives (e.g. testosterone)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Preparations Part III</td>
<td>(Currently none available in Canada)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drugs listed in Part III of the Schedule to Part G of the Food and Drug Regulations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All combinations containing 1 controlled drug in Part II and 1 or more non-controlled ingredient(s) in a recognized therapeutic dose.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benzodiazepines &amp; Other Targeted Substances</td>
<td>Drugs listed in the Schedule to the Benzodiazepines and Other Targeted Substances Regulations.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E.g. alprazolam, diazepam, flurazepam, lorazepam, chloridiazepoxide, clobazam, clorazepate, oxazepam, temazepam, triazolam, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Prescription Drugs</td>
<td>Drugs listed in the Prescription Drug List (PDL) of the Food and Drug Regulations or in Schedule I of NAPRA National Drug Schedules.</td>
<td>Written, faxed or verbal prescription. Verbal prescriptions may be accepted and recorded by a pharmacist, pharmacy technician, or by an intern or registered pharmacy student under the direct supervision of a pharmacist.</td>
<td>Refills permitted. Transfers of authorized refills or quantity remaining are permitted.</td>
<td>Purchase Records: Must be readily available for auditing purposes for at least 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>See above for Dispensing Record Requirements.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. This is a summary; refer to official legislation for detailed information.
3. Prescription and Dispensing Record Requirements are set out in the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA), the Food and Drugs Act (FDA), the Drug & Pharmacies Regulation Act (DPRA) and the Narcotics Safety & Awareness Act (NSAA), the Safeguarding our Communities Act (Patch for Patch Return Policy) and their respective regulations.
4. Per the NSAA, requirements apply to all controlled substances (as defined in the CDSA) and any drugs in the Monitored Drugs List as set out by the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care.
5. A logged prescription is a new, unfilled prescription that is entered into the patient record (‘on hold’) and may be dispensed at a later time.
6. Purchase and Prescription Sales Record requirements are set out in the CDSA and the Drug Interchangeability and Dispensing Fee Act (DIDFA) and their respective regulations.

*See temporary exemptions*