

Patch for Patch Return Policy

Frequently Asked Questions for Patients

What is the Patch for Patch Return Policy?

The Government of Ontario passed legislation titled [Safeguarding our Communities Act \(Patch for Patch Return Policy\)](#) on October 1, 2016. It requires all patients who received a prescription of fentanyl patches to return their patches to their pharmacy before receiving new ones. This is an effort to reduce abuse, misuse and diversion of prescription fentanyl patches. This legislation is supported by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, and the Ontario College of Pharmacists. In general, it applies a “one for one” model, where patients are required to return patches, whether used or unused, to the pharmacy, before the next prescription is filled.

Why is the Patch for Patch Return Policy necessary/important?

Fentanyl and other opioid medications have received considerable attention in the media due to overdoses, deaths, and medication being “diverted” to individuals who are not prescribed this medication. The Patch for Patch Return Policy is helping to achieve a safer community. Fentanyl patches contain enough medication to be harmful and dangerous to children, pets and people who are not prescribed this medication. In returning these patches, you are helping to reduce these risks.

How should the Patches be stored?

Patches should not be left in the open and should be stored away from children and pets. Your pharmacist will provide you with instructions on how to return your used patches to them. A common method is a Patch Return Record Sheet, where you will stick your used patches and write the date beside them. Store this sheet in a secure place and return it to your pharmacist in order to refill your next prescription.

Can I return patches to the doctor’s office or another pharmacy?

No, the patches need to be returned to the dispensing pharmacist. Physicians are not equipped to receive used medication. The prescription and location of the used patches need to be verified by the pharmacist.

How do pharmacists handle a vacation supply?

You must return the same quantity of patches that you received. If you require a larger quantity than usual because you are away for vacation, you must return the same number of patches that is given to you for your identified vacation, in order to receive the next prescription repeat. The pharmacist may ask you to provide proof of your travel dates and will document the number of patches dispensed and returned.

What happens if I lose a patch?

Open and honest communication between the prescribing physician, pharmacist and patient is important to preventing medication from being abused, misused or diverted. If you have lost a patch and are returning fewer patches than what was given to you, your pharmacist will document the occurrence, notify your prescribing physician, and will use their professional judgement to dispense the appropriate number of patches to

you. For example, if you return only 8 out of 10 patches, the pharmacist may dispense 8 or fewer patches with your next renewal. These must be returned before you receive the next prescription.

If you suspect that your patch(es) have been stolen, you are encouraged to fill out a police report, which your pharmacist will request to see prior to dispensing new patches to you.

All instances of lost or stolen patches will be reported by the pharmacist to the prescribing physician and documented by the pharmacist and physician. The pharmacist will also document the number of patches, whether used or unused, that you returned, and the number of patches they have dispensed to you. It is very important to keep your patches stored in a safe and secure place.

What do I do if I feel my use is getting out of control?

One of the risks of opioid medication is that your body may develop “tolerance” over time, and that higher amounts are required, in order to receive the same level of pain control. Over time, some people develop an addiction to opioids. Make sure to talk openly with your prescribing physician about your concerns if you feel you are developing a drug tolerance.

Locally, [Pinewood Centre of Lakeridge Health](#) provides a range of addiction treatment services and there is a team of professionals dedicated to serving people with opioid addiction. Please contact them at the following locations:

- Ajax: 905-683 5950
- Bowmanville: 905-697-2746
- Oshawa Shopping Centre (Galleria): 905-571-3344
- Oshawa – main Pinewood location: 905-723-8195
- Port Perry: 905-985-4721

Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinics provide people with immediate help, short-term addiction treatment and counselling until they can be connected to longer-term supports and programs. The clinics can be accessed on a walk-in basis or you can contact them by phone:

- [Lakeridge Health Oshawa](#), 905-576-8711 ext. 37226, 1 Hospital Crt., Oshawa, ON, L1G 8A2
 - Monday and Thursday, 9 to 11am
- [Pinewood Centre](#), 905-576-8711 ext.37226, 300 Centre St., Oshawa, ON, L1H 2K5
 - Tuesday and Friday, 9 to 11am

Out of Region RAAM Clinics

- [Peterborough Regional Health Centre](#), 705-749-9708, 159 King St. Suite 302-2, Peterborough, ON, K9J 2R8
 - Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 8am to 12pm
- [Scarborough Health Network](#), 416-431-8269, Crockford Pavilion, 3050 Lawrence Ave. E, Scarborough, ON, M1P 2V5
 - Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 9 to 11am