



PharmacareNEWS

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Paxlovid Availability in Nova Scotia

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This communication is to provide you with updated information related to Paxlovid (nirmatrelvir/ritonavir) availability in Nova Scotia. Paxlovid is used for the treatment of mild to moderate COVID-19 in patients who are at high risk for progression to severe disease.

To date, Paxlovid has been supplied by the federal government and has been provided at no cost to patients who meet established criteria in Nova Scotia. The federal supply of Paxlovid is ending.

While federal procurement has ended, supply remains in Nova Scotia that can be used at no cost to patients until May 31, 2024 (last day of dispense May 26, 2024 for a 5 day treatment course). This supply is only available through patient self-referral by completing the provincial Report and Support Form. The [form](#) can be filled out when the patient **books** a PCR test or as soon they test positive on a rapid COVID test either online at <https://c19hc.nshealth.ca/self-report> or by **calling 1-833-797-7772**.

If you receive a prescription before May 26th from a non-designated prescriber (i.e. a prescriber who is not listed as a [designated prescriber](#) with the NS Health COVID-19 Non-Severe Treatment Team), depending on the circumstances, you may want to advise the patient that they may qualify for the publicly funded supply, and they can be referred to the provincial Report and Support Form to self-refer for an assessment by the NS Health COVID-19 Non-Severe Treatment Team. The [form](#) can be filled out online at <https://c19hc.nshealth.ca/self-report> or by **calling 1-833-797-7772**.

The NS Health COVID-19 Non-Severe Treatment Team can be reached by email at COVIDTreatment@nshealth.ca or by phone at 1-833-714-2784 and will continue to be available for consultations from health care professionals as required.

We encourage all pharmacists to become more familiar with Paxlovid as it is becoming available on the market and you may receive prescriptions from non-[designated prescribers](#). Dose adjustments may be required for renal function. Very importantly, Paxlovid has numerous serious drug interactions with many commonly used medications. Paxlovid may be contraindicated in combination with some

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medications (e.g. post-transplant immunosuppressants, anticonvulsants) or require modifications to the patient's other drug therapies (e.g. anticoagulants, psychiatric medications and more). Paxlovid specific resources to aid drug interaction management are provided below:

- [Liverpool COVID-19 Drug Interaction Checker](#)
- [Ontario: Paxlovid Prescribing & Drug Interaction Information | Immunodeficiency Clinic \(hivclinic.ca\)](#)

The list price for a 5-day course of Paxlovid is \$1288. A patient's private insurance may or may not provide coverage. At this time, Paxlovid is not funded by the Nova Scotia Pharmacare Programs as we continue to utilize the federally procured supply until the end of May and await recommendations from the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH).

If you are currently one of the designated pharmacies that has been dispensing the federal supply of Paxlovid you will receive more detailed information.

In summary, the availability of federally procured Paxlovid at no charge to the patient continues through established channels in Nova Scotia for patients who meet specific clinical [criteria](#). We encourage the use of [Report and Support](#) referrals to the NS Health COVID-19 Non-Severe Treatment Team at this time to reach a [designated prescriber](#) and access federally procured Paxlovid for those at high risk of progression to severe disease. Further updates regarding coverage will be provided in the coming weeks.