

Are you taking gabapentin or pregabalin (brand names include: Lyrica, Alzain, Neurontin)

Important changes from 1st April 2019

There will be changes that may affect you from 1st April 2019. These changes follow a government consultation because of concerns around possible misuse and mean that these medicines become Controlled Drugs (CDs). The medicines themselves will not change, but there will be more rules on how they are prescribed and dispensed.

What does this mean for me?

Currently gabapentin and pregabalin prescriptions cannot be sent to your pharmacy using the electronic prescription service (EPS.) If you usually have your prescriptions sent to the pharmacy in this way you may need to collect a prescription from your surgery, or ask your pharmacy to do this.

If you use the repeat dispensing “batch” service (RD) this will no longer be available for these medications and your pharmacy will not be able to dispense any outstanding batches from the 1st April 2019.

Controlled Drug prescriptions **MUST** be dispensed by your pharmacist within 28 days of the **date on the prescription**. (Most prescriptions can be dispensed up to 6 months after this date)

If you are owed any medication by the pharmacy this also needs to be collected within 28 days of the **date on the prescription**.

The quantity on your prescription may be reduced. It is recommended that a maximum of 30 days of CDs should be prescribed, to ensure safety. The prescribing of controlled drugs is closely monitored. This may also mean that you are called in for more regular reviews to make sure that the medicine is still working.

Make sure that you do not run out of your gabapentin or pregabalin as Pharmacists are not allowed to provide emergency supplies or loans for controlled drugs without a prescription.

You (or your representative) may be asked for proof of identity when collecting prescriptions and may be asked to sign that you have received these.

Do I need to do anything?

If you currently get your prescriptions through the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) or RD (batch prescriptions) then speak to your pharmacist or staff at the practice.

If you have a green “paper” prescription for gabapentin or pregabalin please make sure that you get this dispensed before the 1st April 2019 when the new regulations come into force.

If you are ‘owed’ any gabapentin or pregabalin from your pharmacy please make sure you collect this before the 1st April 2019.

When you next request a prescription after the 1st April please be aware that these changes will be in force. This is a nationwide change to the regulations and your GP and Pharmacist are legally required to change practice.