



London Pain Clinic

Controlled Medication Policy - October 2023

Introduction

At the London Pain Clinic, we adhere to the strict regulations outlined in the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 when prescribing controlled pain medications in the United Kingdom. These controlled drugs (CDs) are categorised into five schedules, with Schedule 1 being the most tightly regulated and Schedule 5 the least.

Commonly Prescribed Controlled Pain Medications

Schedule 2 Controlled Drugs. Strictly Controlled

- Morphine
- Fentanyl
- Oxycodone
- Methadone
- Hydromorphone
- Pethidine
- Diamorphine
- Medicinal Cannabis

Schedule 3 Controlled Drugs. Less Tightly Regulated

- Tramadol
- Tapentadol
- Buprenorphine
- Butrans Patches
- Codeine (in specific formulations)
- Pregabalin

Schedule 4 Controlled Drugs. Lower Potential for Abuse

- Ketamine
- Gabapentin
- Benzodiazepines
- Zolpidem
- Zopiclone
- Modafinil

Prescription and Dispensing

All prescriptions for controlled drugs (CDs) must be documented on an FP10 prescription form, bearing the Consultant's handwritten signature. These hard-copy prescriptions should be dispatched via post or courier and must be physically received by the pharmacy.

Please be aware that electronic prescriptions are not accepted for private CD prescriptions.

To ensure you do not run out of your controlled drug medication unexpectedly, we strongly advise you to schedule follow-up appointments at least 14 (fourteen) days before your current medication supply is depleted. This timeframe allows for the necessary processing and delivery of CD prescriptions. Due to high demand, it is advisable to book your next appointment immediately following your current one.

When it comes to Medicinal Cannabis, please allow a minimum of 14 (fourteen) days for prescription processing. Ongoing licensing and supply issues may sometimes render the prescribed product unavailable. In such cases, the Consultant may seek an appropriate alternative and issue a new FP10 prescription, signed and in writing, to the pharmacy. This process could lead to additional delays.

If you wish to change your prescribed medication or increase your current medication dosage, you must arrange a follow-up appointment with the Consultant before an increased-dosage prescription can be issued.

Given the fluctuating schedules of our Consultants, patients are responsible for requesting their medication with ample notice. Please be aware that we do not offer emergency care or issue emergency prescriptions. Additionally, note that pharmacies and wholesalers may experience availability issues affecting the supply of controlled drugs to patients.

Prescriptions are sent to specific pharmacies based on the type of preparation:

- Non-Cannabis Preparations: Pharmaciege
- Cannabis and Topical Cream Preparations: PCCA

Once the pharmacy receives the prescription, they will contact the patient directly to arrange payment and delivery of the medication.

Follow-Up Appointments

Patients must attend regular follow-up appointments with their Consultant as follows:

Appointment Type	Maximum Length of Time between Appointments	Prescription issued for

Initial Consultation	4 weeks	4 weeks
1 st Follow Up	4 weeks	4 weeks
2 nd Follow Up	4 weeks	4 weeks
3 rd Follow Up	12 weeks	12 weeks
Subsequent Follow Ups	12 weeks	12 weeks

Overuse of controlled drugs

If a patient is using medication too quickly, it can lead to concerns about misuse and potential adverse effects. Our approach includes:

1. Assessment and Communication

Determine the reasons behind the overuse and assess the patient's condition.

2. Review Medication Usage

Confirm overuse, review medication history, and verify dosage and frequency.

3. Detailed Instructions

Provide clear instructions on proper medication usage.

Educate the patient about potential risks of overuse.

4. Consider Alternative Treatments

Explore alternative therapies if suitable.

5. Monitoring and Documentation

Establish a monitoring system and maintain thorough records.

Contact the GP to discuss.

6. Collaboration and Referral

Collaborate with the patient on responsible medication use.

Refer to specialists if misuse or addiction is suspected.

7. Adjustment of Treatment Plan

Modify dosage or medication based on assessment.

8. Regular Follow-Up

Schedule frequent 4 week follow-up appointments to monitor progress and adherence.

Limit prescription to a maximum of 4 weeks' medication at a time.

This policy is designed to ensure the safe and effective use of controlled medications while prioritising patient care and well-being.

Long-term Opioids

For patients prescribed long-term opioids, we recommend that you familiarise yourself with our informative document outlining potential adverse effects associated with long-term/ prolonged opioid use. You can access this document via our patient portal (top right-hand side of the London Pain Clinic website) or by following this link:

[London-Pain-Clinic_Potential-adverse-effects-from-long-term-opioids.pdf \(londonpainclinic.com\)](#)



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