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Pharmacy — Prescriptions, Copayments & Emergency Services

Prescription and over-the-counter medications, pharmacy copayments, E-Prescription and emergency pharmacy services in Germany.

Deutsche Begriffe: Apotheke | Rezept | Zuzahlung | E-Rezept | Notdienstapotheke | OTC

Prescription vs. Over-the-Counter (OTC)

Medications in Germany are divided into three categories:

Category	Description	Examples
Prescription	Only available with a doctor's prescription	Antibiotics, blood pressure medication, antidepressants
Pharmacy (OTC)	Without prescription, but only in pharmacies	Ibuprofen, nasal spray, cough syrup
Over-the-counter	Also available in drugstores and supermarkets	Plasters, certain teas, vitamins

Prescription medications are covered by health insurance — you only pay the **statutory copayment**.

Copayment — 5 to 10 Euros per Medication

For each prescription medication, you pay a **copayment of 5–10 €** (10% of the price, minimum 5 €, maximum 10 €). Exceptions:

• **Children under 18** are exempt from copayment

• **Chronically ill patients**: Cost threshold = **1% of gross annual income** (otherwise 2%)

• Once you reach the cost threshold, apply for **copayment exemption** with your health insurance

• Recipients of **Bürgergeld** pay a maximum of approximately **120 € per year**

E-Prescription — Digital and Convenient

Since 2024, the **E-Prescription** (electronic prescription) has been standard. It is stored on your **electronic health card (eGK)**. At the pharmacy, simply insert your card — done. Alternatively, you can use the **E-Prescription App** by gematik.

Advantages:

• No paper prescription needed

• Prescription can be filled at **any pharmacy**

• Medications can be ordered from **online pharmacies**

• Doctor's office sends prescription directly digital

Emergency Pharmacy — Around the Clock

Outside regular opening hours (nights, weekends, public holidays), at least one pharmacy nearby is always on **emergency duty**. There you can pick up urgent medications — an **emergency service fee of 2.50 €** applies.

Find an emergency pharmacy:

• **Phone: 0800 00 22 833** (free of charge)

• apothekenfinder.mobi

• Notice posted on every closed pharmacy

Tips

• **Medication plan**: Starting from 3 prescribed medications, you have the right to a medication plan

• **Generic drugs** are equivalent and often cheaper — ask your pharmacist

• **Language barriers**: Pharmacists are often multilingual. Package inserts can be found on beipackzettel.de in plain language as well

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