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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
<b>Prescription</b>	Only available with a doctor's prescription	Antibiotics, blood pressure medication, antidepressants
<b>Pharmacy (OTC)</b>	Without prescription, but only in pharmacies	Ibuprofen, nasal spray, cough syrup
<b>Over-the-counter</b>	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](https://beipackzettel.de) in plain language as well

--- As of: March 2026. All information without warranty.