

NYRx Notice to Prescribers and Pharmacies: Prescription Versus Over-the-Counter Drugs

February 3, 2026

The NYRx Preferred Drug Program (PDP) promotes the use of less expensive, equally effective drugs when medically appropriate through a [Preferred Drug List \(PDL\)](#). Drugs that are available as both legend (Rx) and over-the-counter (OTC) will be identified accordingly on the PDL.

Preferred Drugs	Non-Preferred Drugs	Coverage Parameters
XII. Ophthalmics		
Antihistamines – Ophthalmic		
azelastine ketotifen OTC olopatadine OTC	bepotastine (gen Bepreve®) Bepreve® epinastine Lastacaft® olopatadine Rx Pataday® Zaditor® OTC Zerviate™	

Preferred drugs will not require prior authorization (PA) if the required coverage parameters are found in the member’s Medicaid claim history at the time of pharmacy claim submission. Non-preferred drugs will require PA. All drugs currently covered by NYRx, the Medicaid Pharmacy Program, remain available under the PDP, and the determination of preferred and non-preferred drugs does not prohibit a prescriber from obtaining any of the medications covered under Medicaid.

For example, a member can obtain olopatadine OTC without a PA, but the olopatadine legend (Rx) formulation would require a PA. This can be true for drugs in other PDL drug classes as well, such as:

- Acne Agents, Topical
- Anti-Fungals, Topical
- Antihistamines – Ophthalmic
- Antihistamines – Second Generation
- Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)
- Proton Pump (PPI)/Acid Secretion Inhibitors

What Pharmacy Providers and Prescribers Need to Do

Pharmacy providers and prescribers should become familiar with the NYRx PDL and incorporate this information when coordinating care for a Medicaid member.

Prescribers refer to the [NYRx Preferred Drug Quick List](#) and prescribe a preferred product to reduce the need for PA.

Information on PA requirements related to clinical criteria can be found in the [PDL](#). If a member requires a non-preferred drug, a PA can be submitted to the NYRx Clinical Call Center for review. For more information on how to submit a PA, refer to the [NYRx Prior Authorization Submission Guide](#).

Resources

- [NYRx Education & Outreach Website](#)
- [NYRx Medicaid Pharmacy List of Reimbursable Drugs](#)
- [NYRx Preferred Drug List](#)
- [NYRx Prior Authorization Submission Guide](#)

Contact Information

The NYRx Education & Outreach Call Center is available by phone at 1-833-967-7310 or by email at NYRxEO@primetherapeutics.com from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM ET, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

The NYRx Education & Outreach team hosts virtual office hours each week for stakeholders to ask questions about NYRx and care coordination. Visit the [NYRx Education & Outreach website](#) for more information.