# Prescription Information: Testosterone

*If you have any challenges picking up your prescriptions, please let us know by sending a message on Patient Portal or calling 877-855-7526 so we can help.*

## Pharmacies:

- **Common issues:** Testosterone prescriptions can be difficult to fill. Please expect that it may take 1-2 weeks from the time of your visit for you to get your testosterone.
  - **Prior Authorization:** If the pharmacy says "your medication is not covered by your insurance" or "authorization is needed" please contact us.
  - **Backordered:** If your pharmacy can't get your testosterone, find out if its backordered or something they can never get in. You may consider switching to a different pharmacy.
  - **Pharmacy Problems:** You may also be able to switch to an online pharmacy; most insurance plans are contracted with a specific mail-order pharmacy. Please let us know if you change pharmacies or if you're having ongoing problems.
  - **Medication Sourcing and Coverage:** If you need to change to a different form of testosterone, you may first need a visit with a PPMM provider to learn about the new medication. This can be done over telehealth, and you can schedule through the Patient Portal or by calling 877-855-7526.

- **Injection Supplies:** If they don't have the correct sizes in stock, ask your pharmacy if they can special order what you need or check their warehouse. You may need to change pharmacies in order to have reliable access to injection supplies. Most areas have Needle/Syringe Exchange programs, which may be able to provide you with free injection supplies is you are having trouble accessing them.

## Refills:

- **Call ahead:** Please contact us 1-2 weeks before you run out of your last fill to give us time to work on your request.

- **Courtesy fills:** If you have run out of refills but have not been able to come in for your required visit/labs, please let us know what's happening for you. Depending how long it's been, you may be able to get a shorter courtesy fill to give you time to follow up.

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## If you're taking testosterone, there are some issues we'd like you to be aware of, to reduce confusion and frustration with the process:

- **Controlled substance:** Testosterone is a DEA controlled substance, and will often require authorization from your insurance. This authorization is usually renewed once yearly. We are only able to write the prescription for 120 days of refills, and some insurance plans will only pay for one month of medication at a time.

- **Administration method:** The pharmacist may have questions about how the medication is taken. Many of our patients take the testosterone through subcutaneous (SQ) injection (under the skin,) but the testosterone is labelled by the FDA for intramuscular injection (IM) (into the muscle). Subcutaneous is a safe and common off-label way to use testosterone. You can let the pharmacist know that the subcutaneous way was not a mistake.

- **Reactions:** If you have a negative reaction to the testosterone, please let us know. We can problem-solve with you. In some cases, you would switch to a different formulation. It is common to get a bit of itching at the injection site, or some soreness and mild swelling at the site for a few days. It is rare, but possible, to have a true allergy to the oil that the testosterone is in. Of course, if you are concerned you're having a serious reaction like difficulty breathing, lip/mouth swelling or severe rash, please call 911.

- **Labels:** If your prescription directions read differently than what you discussed with your provider, please take the medication the way your provider explained it to you. For example, your dosage may have changed. You can always contact us with any questions. The label may have your legal name on it so that insurance will cover it.

- **Needle phobia (fear of needles):** If you have a needle phobia or any other issue that is preventing you from taking your shots, please let us know. Sometimes this will get easier with practice. However, we can work with you to find something that works for you, like testosterone gel that goes on the skin.