

# OHCP NEWSLETTER

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## Controlled Substance Prescriptions -revisited

### What are Controlled Substances?

Controlled Substances are drugs that are regulated by Controlled Substances Act of 1970 (CSA) which have potential for abuse and dependence. They can be both legal and illegal drugs. The federal agency that oversees law enforcement of the CSA is the DEA. This letter will focus primarily on legal drugs.

The CSA divides controlled substances into 5 schedules bases on their potential for abuse and/or dependency.

- CI: High potential, no accepted medical use (examples: heroin & LSD)
- CII: High potential, accepted medical use (examples: Norco, Fentanyl, & Morphine)
- CIII: Potential less than CII (example: Tylenol w/Codeine)
- CIV: Potential less than CIII (examples: Xanax, Ambien, Tramadol)
- CV: Least potential (examples: Lyrica & Phenergan w/Codeine)

Medications in the CII through CV schedules may only be dispensed with a valid prescription (Rx) from a provider that has registered with the DEA and has a valid DEA number. The provider must also be ordering the medication within the normal realm of his/her practice. For example, a dentist can not order Lyrica for seizure treatment.

### What are the requirements of a Controlled Substance Prescription?

In order for a pharmacy to dispense a controlled substance medication, a prescription from a valid prescriber must be received. This prescription must have, at a minimum, the following information:

- Date prescription written
- Patient's full first and last name
- Medication name, strength, & dosage form
- Clear directions for use
- Quantity of medication to dispense
- Refills allowed (for CIII-CV)
- Prescriber's name, address, & DEA number
- Written or electronic prescriber signature

If any of the required items are missing, the prescription is not considered valid and therefore cannot be dispensed.

### CII prescriptions

CII prescriptions are valid for 90 days from the date that they are written. They also may not be refilled. A new prescription must be written for each dispensing. The prescriber may write up to 3 prescriptions for the same medication on the same day, but must indicate on each of the prescriptions the date which it may be dispensed. For example: a doctor may write 3 Rxs for a patient's Ritalin. All would have to have the same written date, but the dispensed date would be different (usually 1 month apart). The pharmacy may not dispense any controlled substance Rx prior to the prescriber's authorized dispense date.

Long Term Care pharmacies are allowed a few exceptions then normal retail pharmacies when dispensing CII medications. LTC pharmacies may accept faxed copies of CII prescriptions, whereas retail pharmacy may not. LTC may also partially dispense a quantity of a CII prescription and use the remaining amount for up to 60 days after the first dispensed amount, or 90 days from the date the Rx was written (whichever comes first). An example would be a PRN Norco order that was written for #120 tablets, but pharmacy sends #30 at a time.

### CIII through CV prescriptions

CIII-CV prescriptions are valid for 6 months from the date that they are written. They may for refilled up to 5 times, if the prescriber indicates refills on the Rx.

### Telephone/ Verbal Controlled Substance prescriptions

A prescriber, or an authored agent of the prescriber (office nurse, etc.) may call the pharmacy with a telephone prescription for CIII-CV medications. The prescription must contain all of the required information, with the exception of the prescriber's signature.

CII emergency telephone prescriptions may only be called by the prescriber directly to the pharmacist. A CII verbal Rx can only be for an emergency dispensing of up to a 72-hour supply of medication. A written/electronic prescription must follow a verbal CII Rx within 7 days of the emergency dispensing.

This summarizes the basic information regarding controlled substance prescriptions. If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact our pharmacy staff for clarification.

References:

-Controlled Substance Act