

Alta Bates Summit Outpatient Pharmacy
Specialty Pharmacy Program



NEW PATIENT WELCOME PACKET

How to Contact Us

Alta Bates Summit Outpatient Pharmacy (ABSOP) is open during regular business hours, Monday through Friday. Pharmacy staff are available to help you with your prescriptions and questions about medication.

Pharmacists are available seven days a week, 24 hours a day, to address your needs. After business hours, we have an on-call pharmacist available to answer urgent clinical questions.



Telephone: 510-204-6550

Toll-Free: 855-744-1692

Fax: 510-204-5895

Address: Sutter Health Alta Bates
Summit Medical Center –
Herrick Campus
2001 Dwight Way, Suite 2182
(2nd Floor)
Berkeley, CA 94704

Located in the Comprehensive
Cancer Center (CCC)

Website: [www.sutterhealth.org/
ABSOP-pharmacy](http://www.sutterhealth.org/ABSOP-pharmacy)

Hours: Monday through Friday
9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

ABSOP will be closed or may have reduced
hours on major holidays.



ACCREDITED

Specialty Pharmacy
Expires 05/01/2024

Welcome

Welcome to the Sutter Health Alta Bates Summit Medical Center's Specialty Pharmacy Program at the Alta Bates Summit Outpatient Pharmacy (ABSOP).

Thank you for the opportunity to serve your pharmacy needs. Please review this guide for important information about our services. Because you may need to refer to this guide in the future, please keep it in a safe place.



About Us

Alta Bates Summit Outpatient Pharmacy (ABSOP) is a specialty pharmacy that helps to treat complex medical conditions including (but not limited to) all types of cancers and inflammatory conditions. Patients can find hands-on support and educational services at our pharmacy.

ABSOP has services that are led by specialty pharmacists who are experts on your medications. They review medications you receive for your safety and their effectiveness for your care. Pharmacists work in close partnership with your healthcare team to monitor your progress. As part of the Comprehensive Cancer Center (CCC), we can review your medical chart. This allows us to look for drug interactions, monitor your labs for safety and easily communicate with your healthcare team.

Tips for Success

At ABSOP, we are by your side throughout your treatment. To get the most out of our services and medications, here are some tips:

1. Be Active in Your Care

Make sure you understand your medications, side effects and symptoms you should watch for. Keep your appointments with the clinic and pharmacy. If we call you, please promptly call us back. Let's work together to manage your health!

2. Follow Instructions

Please follow all instructions from your doctor and pharmacist regarding your medications. We seek to provide clear guidance to help you get the most out of your medications. If we are not being clear, please ask and allow us to explain it again; that is what we are here for!

3. Ask Questions

We welcome all questions and concerns. Let us know about any challenges you may have. The more you ask, the more you know!

4. Keep a List of Your Medications

Make sure you have a list of all your medications either on paper or on your smartphone. Include your prescriptions, over-the-counter (OTC) medications and herbal products. Make sure to update your medication list when there are changes. Carry your list with you at all times.

5. Use Reminders, Pill Boxes or Medisets/Medication Trays

Set up an alarm on your phone to remind you to take your medications on time. Also, if you have rituals around the same time every day—for example, like when you eat breakfast—you can place your medications near your coffee maker so you are visually reminded to take them daily. Using a pill box or a Mediset (medication tray) can also help you make sure you are taking the right medications, in the right amount, at the right time.

6. Get Help When You Need It

You may have days when it is harder to keep track of your medications. Ask your family or friends for support. Call us to see if there are ways we can help you stay on track with your medications.

Support for Therapy Management

Our goal is to support you and your medication therapy management. This means making sure your medications are right for you and that they will help you reach your best treatment outcomes. Any time you start a new medication, we will consult with you and/or your caretaker. We will help you understand and take charge of your care.

Our pharmacists will support you to:

- ▶ Understand how to take your medications
 - ▶ Manage and stay on track with your medications
- ▶ Manage side effects
 - ▶ Store and handle your medications
 - ▶ Answer any questions you may have regarding your therapy

Pharmacist

- Teaches you about your medications, side effects, interactions and monitoring
- Checks side effects, interactions and outcomes of the medicines
- Reviews your medical chart and monitors your progress
- Answers questions and concerns about medications and treatment
- Communicates with you and your provider when necessary
- Performs periodic assessments with you as part of the Patient Management Program

Pharmacy Technician

- Collects patient information necessary for pharmacy processing
- Processes prescriptions
- Dispenses prescriptions
- Communicates with you regarding insurance, copayments, and when your medications will be ready
- Helps with refills and setting up deliveries

Prior Authorization Staff Member

- Works with prescribers and insurance companies to try to obtain medication coverage for non-formulary medications

The Patient Management Program

The Patient Management Program was created and designed to help enhance your compliance with prescribed medication therapy and, as a result, achieve better control of your health. The program consists of one-on-one consultations, assessments and periodic reassessments with a pharmacist. The pharmacist uses current medical and/or scientific evidence and clinical guidelines to help devise a customized therapy plan in conjunction with your input and individual needs.

Benefits of the program include:

- ▶ Information about safe and effective use and handling of your medications to maximize therapy
- ▶ Assistance in learning how to take or inject your medications correctly in order to decrease the risk of adverse events
- ▶ Advice to help prevent and manage side effects
- ▶ Refill reminder calls to ensure you always have enough medication on hand
- ▶ Dedicated staff available to answer questions

Limitations of the program may include:

- ▶ Your willingness to follow directions and adherence with your prescribed therapy
- ▶ Your willingness to remain enrolled in the program
- ▶ Your adherence with recommended interventions
- ▶ Listening skills
- ▶ Your willingness to interact with clinical staff

There is no extra cost to you to be enrolled into this program. All patients are automatically enrolled into the Patient Management Program. You have the right to opt out of (or opt back into) the Patient Management Program at any time.

If you would like to opt out of the program, please notify us by either:

- ▶ Calling the pharmacy and speaking with a staff member regarding your wishes to opt out of the Patient Management Program OR
- ▶ Filling out the "Patient Management Program Opt-Out Form" and mailing it or handing it to a pharmacy staff member

Opting out of the Patient Management Program in no way affects the services available to you through ABSOP. If at a later time you would like to opt back into the Patient Management Program, please contact the pharmacy and speak with a staff member regarding your desire to opt back into the program.

Know About Your Medications

Make sure you know about each of the medications you take. This includes:

- ▶ Why you take it
- ▶ How to take it
- ▶ How to store it
- ▶ What to do with the sharps after administration (if you use an injectable medication)
- ▶ What you can expect while you are taking it
- ▶ What the side effects and warnings are for the medication

Be sure to tell your doctor or pharmacist about:

- ▶ All the medications you take. This includes prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, vitamins, herbs and supplements.

Side Effects to Your Medications

Many medications can cause side effects. Some may go away after taking the medication over time, but some side effects can be a problem or become more serious. If you are having problems with side effects, call your provider or pharmacist. We are here to offer support.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your provider if you have any problems with your medicine.

Ask your pharmacist or provider about what a bad or even life-threatening reaction to your medications might look like. **Call 911 immediately if you think you are having a life-threatening reaction.**

After treatment, contact your provider and our staff to discuss changes in medication.

What Questions Should I Ask About My Medications?

Here are some examples:

- What if I miss a dose or take it wrong?
- Can I drink alcohol with my medications?
- What if I think there is an error in my medication?
- What if I become pregnant?
- When should I call about side effects or reactions?

Accessing Your Medications

Once your medication orders are received, our staff will contact you to keep you updated on when they will be ready. Please feel free to call us if you have questions.

New Medications

Your provider may send your prescription to our pharmacy. Once your health insurance company approves your claim, your medication should be available within the next few business days. You will be contacted by a pharmacy staff member when your prescription is ready for you. Additionally, you may bring a written prescription from your provider to our pharmacy to fill.



Refills of Medications

We automatically process refills for your medications. Our staff will call you three to seven days before your next refill is due. During this call, you can:

- ▶ Arrange a pick-up time or request a delivery of your medications
- ▶ Verify your shipping address
- ▶ Update us if you have any new or existing allergies or changes in your health
- ▶ Connect with a pharmacist if you have any questions about your medications

If we leave a voicemail, please return our call as soon as possible. We cannot automatically ship medications to you without speaking to you first.

Refill Management and Medication Synchronization

We offer refill management and medication synchronization services. In refill management, we will ask your provider for refills of your medications well before you are due for your next fill. This will ensure you have uninterrupted therapy. Medication synchronization is when we coordinate the refills of all your medications so you can pick them up or have them delivered together once a month. Our pharmacy team is happy to organize your medications in order to make delivery or pick-up easier for you.

Deliveries

We offer a once-monthly complimentary courier delivery of your medications to your home, work or another approved location within California. Unfortunately, we are unable to ship to a Post Office Box or to any U.S. Postal Service mailbox at this time.

- ▶ Medications are usually delivered Monday through Friday. Same-day deliveries are available in urgent circumstances and depending on the destination location.
- ▶ Prior to every delivery, staff will contact you to confirm your address, and date and time of delivery. They will also collect method of payment if you have a copay for your medication.
- ▶ We will need to speak to you and confirm your delivery address every time before delivering your medications to you.
- ▶ Signature is required for all deliveries.

If you prefer, you may also pick up your medication from the pharmacy during regular business hours.

Medication Delays or Unavailability

In the event that your medication is delayed or unavailable, we will contact you as soon as possible. Our staff work creatively with alternative ordering and partner with other pharmacies to solve delays. In some cases, patients may be directed to another pharmacy that has your medication in stock.

If there are situations (such as emergencies, natural disasters, etc.) that cause the medication to be unavailable, we will work with your provider to obtain an alternative medication. If this happens, we will keep you informed.

If our pharmacy is unable to provide or order your medication, our staff will work with you to find a pharmacy that can provide your medication.



Safe Storage and Disposal of Medications and Sharps

Safe Storage of Medications

It is important to store all medications safely. Each medication may have different storage requirements. Please ask us how to store your medication.

Always store medications out of children's reach. In case of an emergency, know your local poison control number, call the National Capital Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222, or visit www.poison.org.

Using Injectable Medications: Needle-Stick Safety

Make sure you have a plan for handling and disposing of needles before using them.

- ▶ Have a sharps container to dispose of used needles.
- ▶ Never replace the cap on needles and syringes.
- ▶ Throw away used needles immediately after use in a sharps container.
- ▶ Report all needle-stick or sharps-related injuries promptly to your doctor.



Preparing Unused Medications and Sharps for Trash Disposal

It is important to dispose of medications when they are expired and/or no longer needed. Also, if you use an injectable medication, you will need to dispose of the sharps containers regularly.

Preparing Medications for Disposal

- ▶ DO NOT PLACE MEDICATIONS IN THE REGULAR TRASH.
- ▶ Remove medications from their containers and place them in a clear plastic zippered bag. For creams or liquids, keep them in their original containers and cross out your name before you place them in the clear bag.

Preparing Sharps for Disposal

- ▶ DO NOT PLACE NEEDLES, SYRINGES, LANCETS AND OTHER SHARP OBJECTS IN THE REGULAR TRASH.
- ▶ Place all needles, syringes, lancets and other sharp objects into a sharps container.
- ▶ If a sharps container is not readily available, you may use a hard plastic or metal container with a screw-on top or other tightly securable lid, such as a liquid detergent container. Do not use clear plastic or glass containers.
- ▶ Tape the top of the sharps container or hard plastic/metal container with heavy-duty tape, such as duct or masking tape. Containers should be no more than three-quarters full.
- ▶ For more information on safe needle disposal, please visit www.safeneedledisposal.org.

Preparing Supplies for Disposal

- ▶ Place all other (non-sharp, non-medication) used supplies in a bag that you cannot see through. Place this bag inside of a second bag.
- ▶ Place the (double-bagged) used supplies in your garbage with your other trash.

Special Disposal Bins

Dispose of unused or expired medications and sharps containers in a special bin located at a pharmacy or other location. PLEASE DO NOT FLUSH them in a sink or toilet, and DO NOT dispose of them with regular trash.

To find a bin near you:

- ▶ Go to the California Product Stewardship Council website at www.dontrushtoflush.org.
- ▶ Call your local law enforcement or public health department to find a bin. Some bins are for medications only. Other bins accept medications and sharps.

Billing, Payment and Insurance

Medication Cost

We will bill your insurance company for your medications. However, you may still need to pay a portion of the cost. This is called a copayment or copay. You will need to pay your copay each time your medication is filled. Copay amounts may vary for medications depending on your insurance formulary plan. A pharmacy staff member will inform you of the exact amount you need to pay for each medication.

Payment

We accept Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover credit cards. We also accept cash, personal checks, money orders and most flexible spending account cards.

Financial Assistance

Our pharmacy team has knowledge of and access to some financial assistance programs. These may include manufacturer discount coupons, copay cards, state or federal programs, or foundation assistance. If you are eligible, we will help you enroll in these programs.

Insurance Prior Authorizations (PA)

Depending on your insurance plan, some medications may require a prior authorization (PA) to be completed before we can fill your medications. A prior authorization is approval

from your health insurance provider to pay for your medications. This means that your insurance will pay either a portion of the costs or for all of the costs of your medications. Our staff work diligently to ensure you receive the maximum benefit from your insurance.

We will work with your insurance company and providers to submit the necessary paperwork to complete a prior authorization. This process may take a few days to weeks, depending on the insurance plan and the complexity of your case. Our staff will inform you if your medication needs a prior authorization, and we will be in constant contact with you during and after the prior authorization process. We thank you in advance for your patience.

Insurance Denial

If your insurance denies coverage for your medication, you have the right to file an appeal with your health plan. We will inform you and your provider if this occurs. Our pharmacy team has the knowledge and resources available to help you and your provider with the appeals process.

Insurance Change

If your insurance has changed, please call us to let us know as soon as possible to ensure there is no interruption in your therapy. We can reach out to your new insurance company to approve your medications.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. How Long Do I Have to Wait for My Medications?

When you have a new prescription, your prescription health insurance must receive a prescription claim and approve the claim in order for them to pay for part or all of the prescription cost. Once your insurance has approved your prescription claim, your medication will usually be available within the next few business days. A pharmacy staff member will contact you to let you know when a prescription is ready for you.

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2. Can I Get My Medication Transferred to Another Pharmacy?

We can transfer your medication to another pharmacy at your request. Please have your preferred pharmacy call us so that we can transfer your prescriptions. After the transfer is complete, please follow up with the new pharmacy about the status of your medications.

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3. Will I Get Brand Name or Generic Medications?

ABSOP fills cost-saving, generic-equivalent prescription medications as required by state law, unless you or your physician require otherwise. Many specialty medications do not have available generic equivalents, but if they do we substitute only FDA-approved generic equivalents to brand name medication.

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4. Can I Return Medications?

No. By California law, you cannot return a medication once it leaves the pharmacy.

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5. What if My Medication is Recalled?

A drug or medication recall occurs when a prescription or over-the-counter (OTC) medication is removed from the market because it is found to be either defective or potentially harmful. Sometimes, the makers of the drug/medication will discover a problem with their drug and voluntarily recall it. Other times, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will require the medication to be recalled after receiving reports of problems from the public. Once a drug is recalled, the medication is removed from our pharmacy stock. Our pharmacy monitors these recalls from federal and state agencies, manufacturers and distributors. We will contact you and your prescriber if your medication is recalled, and inform you about next steps.

6. What if I Need an Interpreter?

You may request an interpreter at any time if you are deaf, hearing-impaired, or if English is not your primary language. We will assist you with providing the means necessary for effective communication.

7. Can I Opt Out of the Patient Management Program?

The Patient Management Program was created to help optimize patient medication outcomes. The program is designed to enhance your compliance with prescribed medication therapy and, as a result, achieve better control of your disease.

All patients are automatically enrolled into the Patient Management Program. You have the right to opt out of (or opt back into) the Patient Management Program at any time. If you would like to opt out of the program, please notify us by either:

- ▶ Calling the pharmacy and speaking with a staff member regarding your wishes to opt out of the Patient Management Program
- OR
- ▶ Filling out the "Patient Management Program Opt-Out Form" and mailing it or handing it to a pharmacy staff member

Opting out of the Patient Management Program in no way affects the services available to you through ABSOP. If, at a later time, you would like to opt back into the Patient Management Program, please contact the pharmacy and speak with a staff member regarding your desire to opt back into the program.

8. When Should I Call the Pharmacy?

Please do not hesitate to call us during regular business hours if:

- ▶ You would like to check the status of your order or inquire about a delay in delivery.
- ▶ You have about five doses of your medication left and we have not contacted you. We will work to process your refill as soon as possible.
- ▶ You have questions about your medication, its storage, administration or potential side effects.
- ▶ You believe you may be experiencing a non-life threatening adverse drug reaction.

If you are experiencing what you think is a life-threatening reaction, immediately call 911.

- ▶ You need an early refill due to scheduled travel.
 - ▶ Please call us at least five days ahead of your scheduled travel date.
- ▶ You have had a change in insurance.
- ▶ You have concerns about access to your medications during natural disasters or emergencies.
- ▶ You believe an error may have occurred with your order.
- ▶ You need help in obtaining a medication not available through ABSOP.
- ▶ You have a question about a medication recall, or safe disposal of your medication.
- ▶ You would like to transfer your prescription to another pharmacy.
- ▶ You have questions about any substitutions we have made on your order, such as a generic substitution.

A pharmacist is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to answer any urgent and/or clinical questions you may have. To reach a pharmacist, please call us:

Local Telephone Number

510-204-6550

Toll-Free Telephone Number

855-744-1692

Patient Rights and Responsibilities

The following terms are in addition to Sutter Health's Patient Rights and Responsibilities and are exclusively applicable to the pharmacy services of the Alta Bates Summit Outpatient Pharmacy and East Bay AIDS Center Pharmacy (each, the "Pharmacy") and their patient management programs (each, the "Patient Management Program").

The Patient Has the Right:

- ▶ To know about philosophy and characteristics of the Patient Management Program.
- ▶ To have personal health information shared with the Patient Management Program only in accordance with state and federal law.
- ▶ To speak with a pharmacist or health professional regarding questions or concerns about their medication.
- ▶ To identify the staff member of the Pharmacy and their job title, and to speak with a supervisor of the staff member if requested.
- ▶ To receive information about the Patient Management Program.
- ▶ To receive administrative information regarding changes in or termination of the Patient Management Program.
- ▶ To decline participation, revoke consent or disenroll at any point in time.

The Patient Has the Responsibility:

- ▶ To give accurate clinical, insurance and contact information and to notify the Pharmacy of changes in this information.
- ▶ To submit any forms that are necessary to participate in the Patient Management Program, to the extent required by law.
- ▶ To notify their treating provider of their participation in the Patient Management Program.

To view Sutter Health's Patient Rights and Responsibilities, visit www.sutterhealth.org/for-patients/patient-rights-responsibilities.

Other Patient Information

Patient Advocacy Support

We are here to serve you—we want to help you get the most out of your specialty medication therapy. If you have a question or an issue, please contact us immediately and let us try to resolve the situation.

Listed below are just a few resources dedicated to helping patients learn more and connect with support groups and organizations dedicated to educating patients about their conditions. In addition to education, these organizations can provide valuable support to patients dealing with complex and difficult healthcare needs.

HIV/AIDS Hotline

1-800-367-2437

National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship

1-877-622-7937

Hepatitis C Care Line

1-844-737-6676

MS Advocate for Change

1-800-344-4867

RA Advocate 101

1-844-571-4357

Crohn's and Colitis Advocacy Network

1-800-241-0758

Cystic Fibrosis Foundation

1-800-344-4823

National Psoriasis Foundation

1-800-723-9166

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To learn more about consumer protection and advocacy services, visit the following websites:

National Association of Consumer Advocates

www.consumeradvocates.org

Department of Consumer Affairs

www.dca.ca.gov

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To learn more about disease states, visit www.sutterhealth.org/diseases-conditions.

NOTICE OF HIPAA AND PRIVACY PRACTICES

A copy of the Sutter Health HIPAA and Privacy Practices is available at ABSOP and can also be found on the Sutter Health website at www.sutterhealth.org/privacy/hipaa-privacy.





Sutter Health

Alta Bates Summit Medical Center

Alta Bates Summit Outpatient Pharmacy
Specialty Pharmacy Program