

# How to Read Prescription Labels

Source: [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_5189768\\_read-prescription-labels.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_5189768_read-prescription-labels.html)



Prescription Label

Prescription bottle labels can seem very confusing, but with a few pointers, you'll be able to read prescription labels with no trouble. This article will give you all the information you need to read and understand prescription labels.

## 1. Step 1



### PHARMACY NAME AND ADDRESS

At the top of the prescription label, you will see the name of the pharmacy filling your prescription, and its street address.

## 2. Step 2



### PHARMACY PHONE NUMBER

Near the pharmacy's name and address, you will find the pharmacy's phone number.

### 3. Step 3



### DOCTOR'S NAME

Your doctor's name will appear somewhere on the prescription label. In this example, the doctor's name is near the top. Other labels have the doctor's name near the bottom.

### 4. Step 4



### PRESCRIPTION NUMBER

One of the most important items on a prescription label is your prescription number. You will need to reference this number anytime you need to reorder your prescription.

### 5. Step 5



## DATE

This [date](#) represents the date you filled your prescription. This date has an impact on [insurance coverage](#). Some insurance companies won't fill a prescription until close to when the first prescription is close to gone.

## 6. Step 6



## YOUR NAME

Your name, and sometimes your address, appears prominently on the prescription label.

## 7. Step 7



## INSTRUCTIONS

The instructions on the prescription label is one of the most important items. This tells you exactly how to take or administer the medicine. This was determined by your doctor at the time she or he wrote the prescription.

## 8. Step 8



## MEDICATION NAME AND AMOUNT

The name of your medication and the amount of the capsule or tablet is listed on the prescription label. If your medication is in its generic form, the generic name rather than the brand name will appear on the label.

### 9. Step 9



## NUMBER OF REFILLS LEFT BEFORE NEEDING DOCTOR'S APPROVAL

This sample prescription label indicates that you cannot refill the prescription without your doctor's approval. If there were refills, the number of refills would be listed here.

### 10. Step 10



## EXPIRATION DATE

Don't use the medication past this date. Using medications past their expiration date or shelf life is dangerous. Throw away any prescriptions that have expired.

**Tips & Warnings:** This article is for informational purposes only. If you have any questions about how to read your prescription label that hasn't been answered, be sure to speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

Review:

Local Pharmacy  
123 MAIN STREET  
ANYTOWN, USA 11111 (800) 555-5555

DR. C. JONES

060023-08291 DATE 06-23-09

E. SMITH  
MAIN STREET ANYTOWN, US 11111

ONE CAPSULE BY MOUTH THREE  
DAILY FOR 10 DAYS UNTIL ALL TAKEN

KICILLIN 500MG CAPSULE

MRG

REFILLS - DR. AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED

USE BEFORE 06/23/12  
SLF/SLF

Where is....

1. The expiration date?
2. The number of refills?
3. The medication name?
4. The amount of medication?
5. The instructions?
6. The patient's name?
7. The pharmacy's name and address?
8. The prescription number?
9. The doctor's name?
10. The date of the prescription?
11. The pharmacy's number (if you have any questions)?