Zyrtec® is now available as an over-the-counter (OTC) medication

You no longer need a prescription to purchase Zyrtec®, a nonsedating antihistamine. You can find it at most retail stores and pharmacies for approximately $25 (for a 30-day, 10-milligram supply). In many cases, OTC Zyrtec® costs less than the copay for prescription Zyrtec (same quantity and strength), and can do the same job.

Zyrtec helps relieve the symptoms of indoor and outdoor upper respiratory allergies, often triggered by dust, mold and pet dander, tree pollen, weeds and grasses. Two forms of OTC Zyrtec are available and offer adults and children an affordable and convenient way to help alleviate allergy symptoms such as sneezing, runny nose, watery eyes, as well as itching due to hives. (Zyrtec-D 12® Hour is also indicated to help relieve nasal congestion.)

Pfizer, the manufacturer of brand-name prescription Zyrtec plans to discontinue the production of the prescription medication once there is an adequate supply of the OTC version available. Walgreens Health Initiatives will continue to process prescription Zyrtec as a covered medication until supplies run out.

OTC Zyrtec (cetirizine HCL) and Zyrtec-D 12 Hour (cetirizine HCL 5mg/pseudoephedrine HCL 120 mg) are manufactured by McNeil Consumer Healthcare, a division of McNEIL-PPC, Inc.

Although it’s generally well tolerated, common side effects associated with Zyrtec include drowsiness, tiredness, and dry mouth. For more information, please talk to your doctor or pharmacist, or visit www.ZyrtecOTC.com.

*The FDA has approved OTC status for all Zyrtec indications, except for the treatment of children between the ages of 6 months and 2 years, which still requires a prescription.

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DISCLAIMER: The information provided is not a substitute for medical advice. Consult your doctor for diagnosis and treatment of your medical condition. Advances in medicine may cause this information to become outdated, invalid or subject to debate. Professional opinions and interpretations of the scientific literature may vary. Walgreens Health Initiatives terms of use and general warranty disclaimer apply to all services provided. If you are in need of immediate medical attention, contact your doctor, poison control center or emergency medical professional. If you need to speak with a pharmacist for nonemergency matters, contact your local pharmacist. Drug names are the property of their respective owners.

Brand names are the property of their respective owners.
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Questions & Answers

ZYRTEC® (cetirizine HCl)
Available Without a Prescription

Is ZYRTEC® the same as the prescription version?
Yes. Beginning January 24, 2008, you will be able to buy the same 24-hour, original prescription strength ZYRTEC® products to relieve your indoor and outdoor upper respiratory allergy symptoms in pharmacies and retail stores wherever over-the-counter (OTC) medicines are sold.¹

What symptoms does ZYRTEC® relieve?
You will receive the same effective relief you have always trusted. ZYRTEC® and Children’s ZYRTEC®, available without a prescription, provide effective relief of the following symptoms due to indoor and outdoor upper respiratory allergies:
- Runny nose
- Itchy, watery eyes
- Sneezing • Itching of the nose or throat
ZYRTEC® also relieves itching due to hives.

ZYRTEC-D® 12 HOUR® Extended Release Tablets contain two active ingredients to relieve these indoor and outdoor upper respiratory allergy symptoms including nasal congestion and sinus pressure.

How is ZYRTEC® offered without a prescription?
The makers of ZYRTEC® asked the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to approve a change to over-the-counter (OTC) status so that ZYRTEC® could be available in its original prescription strength, without a prescription. The FDA granted approval for ZYRTEC® after a detailed review of its profile.

Why is ZYRTEC-D® located behind the counter?
In most states, ZYRTEC-D® is available without a prescription. However, as required by law, decongestant medications containing pseudoephedrine like ZYRTEC-D® are sold behind the counter.
ZYRTEC-D® treats indoor and outdoor upper respiratory allergies and also relieves nasal congestion.
You can ask for ZYRTEC-D® at the retail or pharmacy counter.

¹ Not all prescription indications will be switched to OTC status.
**How much will ZYRTEC® cost?**

The estimated retail cost for a 30-day supply of ZYRTEC® is now under $25. For the same ZYRTEC you've been using, you may be paying less than your previous co-pay. Since ZYRTEC® is available over-the-counter, it may no longer be covered by your prescription benefits program.

**Can I use my Flexible Spending Account (FSA) or Health Savings Account (HSA) dollars to purchase ZYRTEC®?**

Yes, you can use these funds to buy ZYRTEC®. Ask your benefits administrator for more information on how to use your FSA or HSA dollars to pay for ZYRTEC® products.

If you have further questions, e mail us at [director@chip.state.il.us](mailto:director@chip.state.il.us)