

The Basics of Compounding and Frequently Asked Questions

What is compounding?

Compounding is the art and science of creating a particular pharmaceutical product in response to a prescription from a licensed clinician. Manufactured medications generally offer a “one size fits all” approach to patient care that is not always adequate to properly address a patient’s needs. Compounding offers practitioners the opportunity to customize medical therapies so they are better tailored to meet the challenges associated with patients’ unique conditions.

What are the benefits of compounded prescriptions?

The use of compounded prescriptions can provide an array of benefits for both patients and providers. Compounded prescriptions can be an invaluable tool to help improve patient compliance when a patient is either unwilling or unable to use a medication as directed. Compounded prescriptions may also offer prescribers beneficial alternatives to standard therapies that may not be suitable for a number of reasons.

Compounded medications can be advantageous for:

- Patients requiring a dosage strength not commercially available
- Patients who require different formulations (e.g. making a liquid medication to replace a tablet or capsule or topical formulations of oral drugs for patients who cannot swallow)
- Patients who need or desire to avoid unwanted ingredients or allergens (e.g. dyes, preservatives, lactose, gluten)
- Making medication more palatable by adding flavors
- Providing medications that are otherwise unavailable due to production shortages or discontinuation
- Providing biomimetic hormone replacement therapy
- Making treatment regimens more patient friendly by reducing “pill burden”
- Treating complex or difficult to treat disease states by utilizing multiple drugs in a single dosage form

How are compounded drugs regulated? Are they safe?

The Food and Drug Administration has stated that the compounding of individualized medicines is both legal and ethical as long as they are prescribed by a licensed practitioner for an individual patient and prepared at a licensed pharmacy. Compounding pharmacies are licensed and regulated by the state board of pharmacy.

Our pharmacy maintains a clean compounding laboratory with professional grade compounding equipment. Our staff is educated and experienced in their practice. All compounded medications are verified by a licensed pharmacist to ensure quality and accuracy. Compounding chemicals and supplies are purchased only from the largest and most reputable compounding drug suppliers. Additionally, we are afforded access to direct consultation with the most respected compounding professionals in the industry, should a pharmacist or physician have any questions.

Will a patient's insurance cover compounded medications?

Some insurance companies do pay for compounded medications. Others still allow patients to be directly reimbursed by sending in claim forms after a prescription has been picked up. For patients who do not have coverage, our pharmacy provides reasonable costs and even offers discount coupons to ensure affordability.

What kind of prescriptions can be prepared?

Our pharmacy staff is trained and experienced in the formulation and preparation of numerous non-sterile pharmaceuticals useful for:

- Hormone replacement (creams, capsules, and troches)
- Pain management (capsules, creams, and gels)
- Management of neuropathy
- Veterinary, including flavored animal treats
- Pediatric medications
- Hospice medications
- Dentistry
- Podiatry

This list is but a sample of the compounding applications offered. Our pharmacists are always available to advise and assist with any questions or special requests.