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Talk to your pharmacist!

# Bringing prescription drugs into the U.S. from foreign countries

**CAUTION:** If you're hoping to save money by buying prescription drugs in a foreign country and bringing them back to the United States, know the rules.

Under federal law, it is illegal for anyone except drug manufacturers to import into the U.S. any prescription drug that has not been approved for sale by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

In almost all cases, individual citizens are prohibited from importing prescription drugs into the U.S. However, the FDA provides guidance for "Coverage of Personal Importations" of unapproved new drugs.



The FDA may allow an individual entering the U.S. to import a three-month supply of an unapproved drug, but only if the following conditions are met:

- The intended use of the drug is for a serious condition for which effective treatment may not be available domestically, either through commercial or clinical means
- The drug will not be distributed commercially by the importer
- The product is considered not to represent an unreasonable risk
- The individual seeking to import the drug affirms that the drug is for the patient's own use and provides the name and address of the doctor licensed in the U.S. responsible for his or her treatment with the product, or provides evidence that the product is for continuation of treatment begun in a foreign country

The FDA regulates prescription drugs made in the U.S., and is also responsible for pharmaceutical admissibility determinations.

If you have any questions about whether a specific drug may be imported into the U.S., contact the FDA Division of Import Operations and Policy directly at (301) 443-6553.

You can get more information from the FDA regarding the importation of prescription drugs at [www.fda.gov/ora/import/traveler\\_alert.htm](http://www.fda.gov/ora/import/traveler_alert.htm).

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