
ONTARIO IMPROVES ACCESS TO DRUGS*McGuinty Government Funds New Drugs To Treat Diabetes And Colorectal Cancer***NEWS**December 3, 2008
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Ontarians living with diabetes and those being treated for colorectal cancer will now have better access to the prescription drug medicines they need.

Ontario is adding six drugs to those products covered under the Ontario Public Drug Programs, including:

- Lantus, an extended, long-acting insulin that is released slowly and constantly into the bloodstream and lowers blood glucose levels.
- Vectibix, a new intravenous drug used for colorectal cancer patients when standard chemotherapy treatment has been unsuccessful.

The other drugs being added are: Rasilez for hypertension, Orencia for rheumatoid arthritis, and Enbrel and Raptiva, both for psoriasis. These drugs will give many Ontarians easier access to alternative treatments.

Ontario Public Drug Programs provide coverage for Ontarians aged 65 and over, residents of long-term care homes and homes for special care, those who receive professional home care services and social assistance, people who have high drug costs compared to their income, and cancer patients.

QUOTES

“Ontarians with diabetes will be able to better manage their disease and colorectal cancer patients will have new hope of a successful treatment,” said Health and Long-Term Care Minister David Caplan. “They join the millions of Ontarians each year who benefit from coverage through Ontario Public Drug Programs for diseases and medical conditions.”

QUICK FACTS

- Each year, 2.8 million Ontarians receive \$3.8 billion in drug benefits from Ontario Public Drug Programs – representing 45% of total prescription drug costs in the province.
- In fiscal year 2007/08, the ministry reinvested \$260 million in savings into the public drug system as a result of initiatives under the Transparent Drug System for Patients Act, 2006 (Bill 102).
- Since October 2003, the Ontario government has added 130 brand-name drugs to the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary and Exceptional Access Program, and 8 brand-name cancer drugs (24 new cancer indications) to the New Drug Funding Program.

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Find out about the [Ontario Public Drug Programs](#).