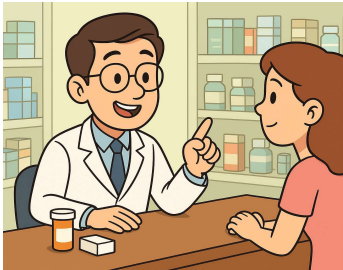


Your **Pharmacist:**
Your Partner in Better Health

Parag Shah, RPh.
Community Pharmacist



Goals of this session

- Good understanding of the services Pharmacists can provide
- Eligibility for some of these services
- Inspire to know your pharmacist!

About the Presenter



- **Parag Shah**, BSc, BScPhm, RPh
- Graduated from the University of Toronto (2010)
- Currently the Designated Manager at *Medicine Cabinet Pharmacy* in Toronto
- Course Coordinator and Instructor for SolRx Pharmacy Review Programs, a healthcare education company that supports pharmacists and students across Canada
- Past involvement in teaching and preceptorship with the University of Toronto's Faculty of Pharmacy
- Passionate about patient education, medication safety, and empowering people to take an active role in their health

⚠ Important Note Before We Begin

- Please note that I **cannot answer any personal medical questions** or provide **specific drug information** during this session.
- The purpose of today's presentation is to:
 - Explain **what pharmacists do** and how they are part of your healthcare team.
 - Highlight the **services pharmacists can provide in Ontario**.
 - Show how pharmacists can **support you in achieving your health and wellness goals**.
- For individual medical concerns, please consult your pharmacist or healthcare provider directly.

1950s	2010s	2020s
Here's your pills.	Here's your flu shot.	Here's your diagnosis, your follow-up plan, and your bloodwork. I drew it while checking your blood pressure.
Because your doctor's next appointment is in 6 months.		

Why This Matters



- Pharmacists are the **most accessible** health professionals — no appointment needed*
- Many seniors visit their pharmacy more often than their doctor's office.
- Pharmacists can now provide **more services** than ever in Ontario.
- Knowing what they can do saves time, improves safety, and keeps you healthier.

Question...

- In Ontario, which of the following can a pharmacist do?
- A) Without talking to the doctor, prescribe for minor ailments like pink eye or UTIs
- B) Provide vaccinations and injections
- C) Extend or adapt prescriptions even if the doctor is not available
- D) Offer advice on over-the-counter products and vitamins
- E) All of the above
- ☒ **Correct answer: E) All of the above**

What Does a Pharmacist Do?

- Ensure prescriptions are **filled safely and accurately**
- **Check for drug interactions** and potential side effects
- Provide clear **advice on how and when to take medications**
- Help manage and prevent **side effects or medication problems**
- Offer guidance on **over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and supplements**
- **Prescription extensions and adaptations***



What Does a Pharmacist Do?

- Conduct **MedsCheck** or medication reviews to keep your therapy up to date
- Provide **vaccinations and injections**
- **Prescribe for minor ailments** such as pink eye, cold sores, allergies, or UTIs
- Offer **health and wellness services** – blood pressure checks, smoking cessation, and chronic disease support
- Help with **cost-saving options**, blister packaging, and medication synchronization



Pharmacist as Part of Your Health Care Team

- Works with your doctor, nurse practitioner, and specialists.
- Communicates medication changes, updates, and concerns.
- Helps coordinate care after hospital discharge (medication reconciliation).
- Supports chronic disease management — diabetes, hypertension, COPD, etc.
- Ensures safe transitions of care between hospital and home.



Medication Reviews (MedsCheck Program)



- Available for Ontarians taking 3+ chronic medications.
- Free, in-person or virtual appointment (conditions apply)
- You'll receive a complete list of medications and personalized advice.
- Bring all your pills, blister packs, and supplements.
- Goal: make sure every medication is still needed, safe, and effective.
- Communicate with your primary care provider

New Powers & Services in Ontario (2023–2025 Updates)



Pharmacists can now:

- Prescribe for 19+ minor ailments** (e.g., UTIs, pink eye, cold sores, rashes, allergies).
- Administer many vaccines** (including COVID, shingles, flu, RSV).
- Extend prescriptions**
- Adapt doses or formulations** if needed.
- Order and interpret some lab tests** (coming soon / pilot programs).



These changes help reduce wait times for doctors and improve access to care.

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What Are Minor Ailments?

- Common, short-term conditions that are easily diagnosed and treated.
- Examples pharmacists can now treat in Ontario:
 - Allergic rhinitis (hay fever)
 - Pink eye
 - Cold sores
 - Urinary tract infection (for women)
 - Mild eczema or dermatitis
 - Oral thrush
 - Canker sores
 - Heartburn
- Covered by **OHIP** — no fee for the consultation.

DID YOU KNOW?

Our pharmacists can treat these **19 common conditions** (Minor Ailments)

Allergies	Oral Thrush	Eye Infections	Menstrual Cramps
Cold Sores	Hemorrhoids	Acne	Canker Sores
Skin Irritations (Dermatitis)	Strains & Sprains	Acid Reflux, Heartburn	Threadworms, Pinworms
Insect Bites & Stings	Urinary Tract Infections (UTI)		

Important Vaccines for Seniors

- **Flu shot** — every year (available at pharmacy, usually mid-October onward).
- **COVID-19 booster** — seasonal update recommended.
- **Shingles (Shingrix)** — 2 doses, covered for adults 65–70 in Ontario.
- **Pneumococcal (Pneumovax 23)** — protects against pneumonia, 65+.
- **RSV vaccine** — new option, ask if eligible (75+).
- **Aside** - Pharmacists can administer these vaccines



Other Ways Your Pharmacist Can Help

- Blood pressure checks and monitoring.
- Smoking cessation counselling.
- Help with medication costs (generic options, patient assistance programs).
- Pill organizers, compliance packaging.
- Travel health advice and vaccinations.
- Home delivery and medication synchronization.



Tips to Make the Most of Your Pharmacist



- Keep one “home” pharmacy — avoids medication duplication.
- Bring a full medication list or your vials when you visit.
- Ask questions: *What is this for? How long do I take it? Any side effects?*
- Update your pharmacist after any hospital visit or medication change.
- Use MedsCheck yearly — it’s free and valuable.
- Don’t be shy — pharmacists love helping patients understand their medicines.

Summary

- Pharmacists are medication experts and accessible healthcare partners.
- You can now get treatment for minor ailments, vaccines, and more — often same day.
- Make use of MedsCheck, renewals, and medication reviews.
- Building a relationship with your pharmacist helps you stay healthier and safer.



Q&A



Resources Slide

- Ontario College of Pharmacists: www.ocpinfo.com
- Ontario Pharmacists Association: www.opatoday.com
- Government of Ontario – Minor Ailments: www.ontario.ca/minorailments

Thank You. 🙏
