COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
BOARD OF REGSISTRATION IN MEDICINE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON SELF-PRESCRIBING

Adopted May 2, 2019

**FAQs**

Whenever a physician prescribes, there are clinical, legal and ethical considerations.

**Is a Massachusetts physician ever permitted to self-prescribe?**

Yes, in certain circumstances, a Massachusetts physician may self-prescribe. When the physician needs care for a medical problem, the physician may self-prescribe.

**What self-assessment should I do before self-prescribing?**

Here is a checklist.

1. Is this prescription issued for a legitimate medical purpose?
2. Is the medical problem I want to prescribe for within my professional expertise and clinical training?
3. In this particular situation, is my professional objectivity uncompromised?
4. Am I treating myself the same way I would treat a patient of mine?

If the answer to any of the checklist questions is “no,” you should seek the medical advice of another physician.

**I currently do not have malpractice insurance because I do not render direct or indirect patient care in Massachusetts or I fall under an exception under 243 CMR 2.07(16)(d). Do I need malpractice insurance to self-prescribe?**

No. Self-prescribing is not considered direct or indirect patient care.

**When is self-prescribing prohibited?**

According to Board regulation, 243 CMR 2.07(19), a physician is prohibited from prescribing controlled substances in Schedules II, III, or IV for his or her own use.

**For more information, where can I look?**

Prescribing Policies and Guidelines, <https://www.mass.gov/doc/policy-15-05-prescribing-practices-policy-and-guidelines-october-8-2015/download>

The Department of Public Health Drug Control Program, **617-973-0800,** <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/drug-control-program>

The AMA Code of Medical Ethics, Opinion 8-19, Self-Treatment or Treatment of Immediate Family Members, <https:// ama-code-medical-ethics-opinion-physicians-treating-family-members/2012-05>