

Women in Oregon no longer need Rx for birth control

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(HealthDay)—Oregon has become the first state to allow women to

obtain birth control without a doctor's prescription.

The new law was signed last July by Gov. Kate Brown and took effect Jan. 1. California plans to do the same and U.S. senators in Colorado and Washington have both introduced versions of Oregon's new law, according to *KOIN* television station in Portland.

In Oregon, women 18 and older can go into a pharmacy and complete a special health questionnaire. If everything is in order, the pharmacists will give them a prescription for [birth control](#). Women younger than 18 still require a doctor's prescription, but that requirement will be removed within a few years, according to the news report. A pharmacist can refuse to prescribe birth control for religious reasons, but must refer the patient somewhere else.

"Just having birth control accessible through a [pharmacist](#) doesn't mean preventative health care isn't important. That's not what this law is saying," said Alison Edelman, M.D., M.P.H., of the Oregon Health & Science University in Portland, according to *KOIN*. The new law allows "increased access to women for something that's incredibly safe and a really big need for [women](#)," Edelman added.

More information: [Health Highlights: Jan. 4, 2016](#)

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