

# North Carolina Medicaid recipients can obtain OTC birth control pills at pharmacies at no cost

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North Carolina Medicaid recipients can begin receiving over-the-counter birth control pills at no cost this week through hundreds of participating

pharmacies.

The oral contraceptive Opill will be covered and available without a prescription to Medicaid enrollees starting Thursday at more than 300 retail and commercial pharmacies in 92 of the state's 100 counties, Gov. Roy Cooper's office said.

The coverage emerged from a 2021 law that let pharmacists prescribe different kinds of contraception in line with state medical regulations. North Carolina Medicaid began signing up pharmacists to become providers in early 2024, and the state formally announced the Medicaid benefit [two weeks ago](#).

"North Carolina is working to expand access to health care and that includes the freedom to make decisions about family planning," Cooper said in a news release. He discussed the coverage Wednesday while visiting a Chapel Hill pharmacy.

Opill is the first over-the-counter [oral contraception](#) approved by federal drug regulators. Pharmacy access could help remove cost and access barriers to obtaining the pills, particularly in [rural areas](#) with fewer providers who would otherwise prescribe the birth control regimen, the governor's office said. Medicaid-enrolled pharmacies will be able to submit reimbursement claims.

The state's overall Medicaid population is nearly 3 million. Fifty-six percent of the enrollees are female.

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