

## Importing Medicine into Japan: Part 1 (the illegal stuff)

### **DO NOT BRING OR SHIP THESE TO JAPAN UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE:**

*Heroin, Cocaine, MDMA (ecstasy), Opium, Pseudoephedrine, Codeine, Cannabis and Stimulants. Prozac and Viagra are also illegal in Japan. **Please Note:** Actifed, Nyquil, Sudafed, Vick's Inhalers and Adderall are **banned!***

## Importing Medicine into Japan: Part 2 (No *yakkanshoumei*)

If you do not want to obtain a *yakkanshoumei* but want to ship medicine from home (**including** birth control), you **MUST** observe the following regulations:

Over the Counter (OTC) Medicine	Prescription Medication
<u>2 Month Supply</u>	<u>1 Month supply</u>
Includes: ibuprofen, acetaminophen (Tylenol), vitamins and contact lenses	Includes: preloaded syringes and inhalers

List of approved psychotropic drugs & quantities is accessible at: <http://ncd.mhlw.go.jp/img/en/total.pdf>

## Importing Medication into Japan (with a *yakkanshoumei*)

(from *jetsendai*)

1. Have the medication shipped to Japan via the post office. Inside the package, include the original copy of the prescription as well as a doctor's letter
2. The mailer should also send you (separately) an envelope containing copies of the prescription and doctor's letter as well as the receipt from the post office for the package.
3. When the package arrives to Japan, chances are it will be held by customs. You will receive a postcard informing you of this.
4. Send the postcard, copies of the prescription, doctor's letter, postal receipt, and a letter explaining your situation to CLAIR.
5. CLAIR will apply on your behalf for a *yakkanshoumei*. Once the *yakkanshoumei* goes through, customs will release your medication and ship it to you. Please be aware you may be liable to customs storage expenses.

CLAIR Address:

ATTN: Yakkan Shomei Desk  
Implementation Division  
JET Programme  
Management Department  
Council of Local Authorities  
for International Relations  
(CLAIR)

Hanzomon Sogo Building  
Kojimachi 1-7  
Chiyodaku  
TOKYO 102-0083

## Getting Medicine in Japan (Part 1): The Drugstore

You can buy OTC medicine in drugstores (薬屋 or 薬局) throughout Japan. However, you cannot get a prescription filled in Japanese drugstores; you MUST visit a pharmacy (see below). For us in Kumamoto, our 'drugstores' include Don Quixote, Cosmos, Matsumoto Kiyoshi, Drugstore Mori, BIC Camera etcetera. All medications in Japan have the following on their packing: 第○数医薬品 (*dai* ○ *suuiuahin*) 'Class ○ Medicine'. ○ will be a number ranging from 1-3, which indicates the classification of medicine.

Class 1: Prescription only. Strong medication with a high probability of side effects

Class 2: Not as strong as Class 1 but still has a risk of side effects.

Class ②: Do not take this with other medications.

Class 3: OTC. Pharmacists and retailers will sell these and be able to answer any questions.

## Reading a Dosage

**【用法・用量】** 下記の1回量を朝夕食後なるべく30分以内に水又はお湯と一緒に服用してください。

年齢	1回量	1日服用回数
成人(15歳以上)	2カプセル	2回(朝・夕)
7歳以上15歳未満	1カプセル	2回(朝・夕)
7歳未満	服用しないこと	

製造販売元 グラクソ・スミスクライン・  
コンシューマー・ヘルスケア・ジャパン株式会社  
東京都渋谷区千駄ヶ谷4丁目6番15号  
お客様相談室 ☎03-5786-6315



用法・用量: Usage • Dose (may also appear as 用療)

用液: Solution

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～ごと～ : every ~

水またはお湯で服用して下さい: Take with (cold) or hot water.

年齢 : Age

成人 : Adult

○歳以上: [x] and over (15 歳以上 = '15 and over')

○回量○錠: in ○ dose (1 回量 3 錠 = 'in 1 dose take 3 tablets')

1 日服用回数: 'in 1 day take ○ times' (ie. 2 回 means 2 times. 'take 2 capsules 2 times in a day')

食後なるべく○分以内に服用してください。: Please take within 30 minutes after eating.

一時間毎 : Every hour

必要に応じて: Take as necessary

隔日: Every other day

食前 : Before eating

眠時 : At bedtime

半分 : Half

傾向的 : By mouth

医師の指示通り : As instructed by your doctor

## A word of caution about Japanese dosages:

Japanese dosages (in comparison to US dosages) are typically weaker. As a result, you may find yourself prescribed with taking 5 tablets. If you have any concerns or questions about the dosage, you should consult the doctor.

## Getting Medicine in Japan (Part 2): The Pharmacy

Doctor visits are required if you want to obtain prescription medication. Please be aware that medicines which may be OTC in your home country (ie. *Flonase*) are considered <sup>しょうほうせん</sup>処方箋 (*shohousen*) 'prescription' drugs in Japan. After a visit to the doctor's office, you will receive a <sup>くすりてちょう</sup>お薬手帳 (*okusuritechou*) 'drug history handbook', a small booklet that contains your prescription history. You will need this when you want a refill, so you should bring it with you whenever you visit the doctor. Pharmacies are always within the hospital (病院の薬局) or outside of the hospital (調剤薬局). When you receive your prescription, it must be filled 4 days after being issued. Often times, doctors will prescribe 漢方, (*kampo*) 'herbal medicine' such as ginseng, angelica, peppermint etcetera. Finally: **Japanese pharmacies DO NOT HONOR foreign prescriptions!!!** Japanese doctors may not be able to prescribe the same medicine but they can prescribe very similar medications.

## Getting Medicine in Japan (Part 2): Payment for Prescription Medication (Insurance)

Since we are living in Japan, we are required to sign up for a health insurance plan. You can sign up for the National Health Insurance (国民健康保険) program or the Employee's Health Insurance (健康保険). Most JETs are enrolled under the Employee's Health Insurance\*. Coverage wise, the two insurance programs are the same: 70% of your healthcare costs will be taken care of by your insurance and the remainder 30% you have to pay. However: be aware that not all medicine costs will be covered by your insurance (**especially birth control**). For these medications you will have to pay entirely out of pocket. When you receive your health insurance card, keep it on your person at all times. You will also receive a sticker that you can put on your card that indicates you are ok with taking generic medicine in case you are hospitalized.

# KUMAMEDICINE: MEDICINE IN JAPAN

## Common Cold Related

English	Japanese	Romaji
Allergy	アレルギー	<i>arerugii</i>
Antihistamine	抗ヒスタミン薬	<i>kouhisutaminzai</i>
Asthma	喘息	<i>zensoku</i>
Common Cold	風邪	<i>kaze</i>
Cough	咳	<i>seki</i>
(violent) Cough	咳き込む	<i>sekikomu</i>
Fever	熱	<i>netsu</i>
(onset of) Fever	発熱	<i>hatsunetsu</i>
Nausea	吐き気	<i>hakike</i>
Nausea/Gagging	こみ上げる	<i>komiageru</i>
Phlegm	痰	<i>tan</i>
Shivering	さむけ	<i>samuke</i>
Sneezing	くしゃみ	<i>kushami</i>
Stiff shoulders	肩こり	<i>katakori</i>
Throat	喉	<i>nodo</i>

A longer list is available at:  
<http://kumamotojet.com>  
 Please be aware that terms may appear differently on actual labels than they are presented here.



## Medicine I have in my house:

Common Cold: Contac	Headaches: EVE Quick	Bites: mushi sasare	Mask
A medication that treats the symptoms of a common cold including cough, sore throat, phlegm etcetera.	As its main active ingredient suggests (ibuprofen), EVE is used for headaches. Quick is for headaches and the EVE-A series is for menstrual cramps	Use this to provide relief to bug bites, including <i>mukade</i> *	Masks are commonly worn for the prevention of colds all year round. It's common courtesy to wear a mask to prevent the spread of colds as well.

\* if you are stung by a *mukade*, please seek immediate medical attention.

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