# ECW Newsletter
Prescribing Tips

There are quite a few tricks to prescribing medicines in ECW – some you probably know, but some you may not.

The current medication list is shown in the right panel of the hub (Overview tab). If you hover your mouse over the medicine, the full prescribing information will appear (black rectangle). Clicking on the "Rx" box in the hub will take you to the medication summary – the screen shot below. You have a lot of options for viewing the medicines in this screen. The first box ("Date") allows you to list by date OR by medication. When you are trying to see when the last refill for oxycodone was, changing this choice to "Medications" is quite helpful.
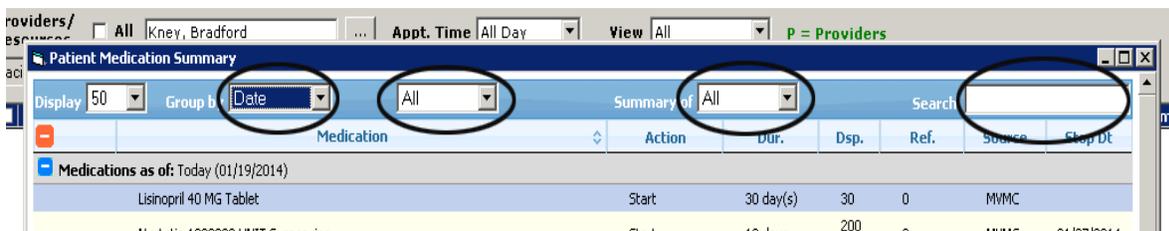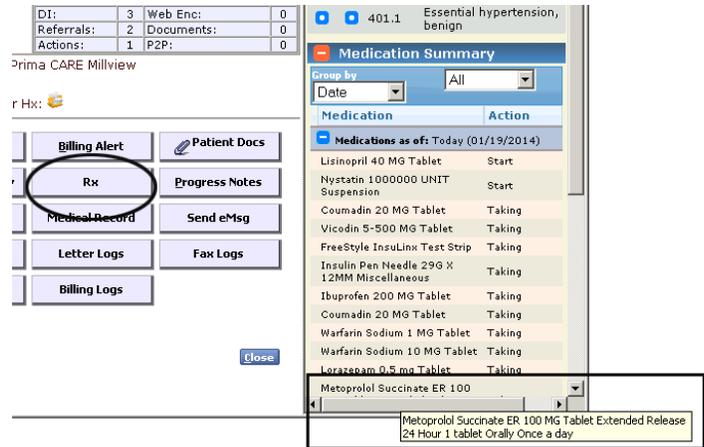
Here you can see a snippet from Amanda Test's ibuprofen history. The second ellipse above ("All") has the dropdown option of choosing different encounter dates to see what happened on a particular date (was a med refilled, started, stopped, or simply confirmed as taking?).

The third ellipse above ("Summary of All") just lets you choose the time period you want to review (All, 1 month, 3 months, etc.). The last ellipse around the "Search" field allows you to search for a particular medicine. Say you want to see if the patient ever took meloxicam, you could put that in the search field to find out (one caveat – ECW does not appear to search for all names of the same medicine – so if Keflex was prescribed and you search for cephalexin, you won't find it) . This functions somewhat like the "History" button in LMR.

Once in a progress note, your options for stopping, refilling, and prescribing medicines expand considerably. One option is to refill medications from the "Overview" tab in the right panel when working in a progress note. Use the "R" button to refill a medicine. The default is to refill for 30 days

with 1 additional refill. If the instruction includes "Once a day" or "Twice a day" - ECW will include the correct number of pills in the prescription. ECW recognizes only a few frequency entries – if you enter "Once a day on an empty stomach", ECW gets confused. You CAN enter extra wording in the "Take" field (as in "1 tablet on an empty stomach" and leave the frequency as "Once a day"). In the example above, you see that ECW provided a default of 30 pills for lorazepam, but did not provide this for the Coumadin, as it did not have a frequency listed. You can easily stop a medicine from this area as well – using the "S" button. Or simply verify that the patient is continuing the medicine by hitting the "C" button.

The next way to refill, stop, continue, or START a medicine is in the "Treatment" section of the note. By clicking the "Add" button, you can add a new medicine. One trick is to pull down the little arrow next to "Add" and choose "Rx without Formulary" if you want to make sure you can see your favorite meds. Often, when you use the default "Rx with Formulary", your favorite meds are not available.
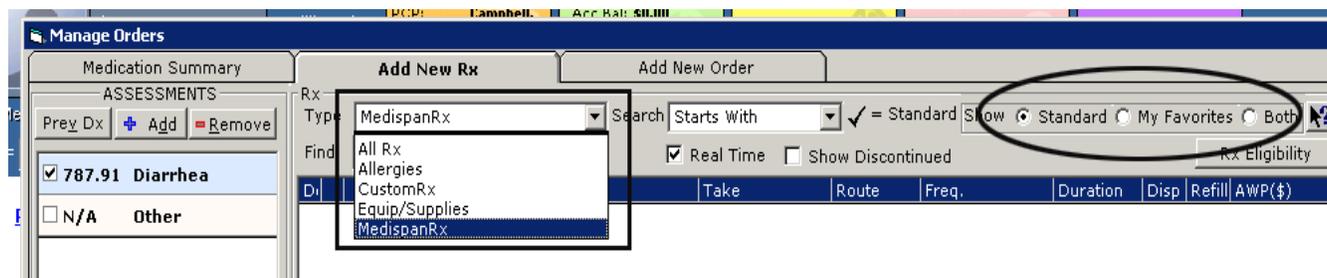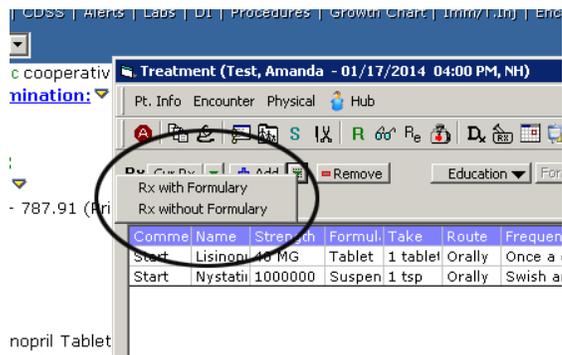
Once you are in the "Manage Orders" screen, you have a LOT of options. You have the diagnosis under which you are working (on the far left of the screen shot), the database from which you are pulling the medication (MedispanRx is the one you usually want to work from – all the meds in this database are NDC-linked, and can be sent electronically to a pharmacy), the type of search ("Real time" searches as you type), and whether you want to use the full database list ("Standard"), your favorites only, or both. If you use "All Rx", you will bump into some custom entries that are not NDC-linked, and you may not be able to send the script electronically. The "CustomRx" is particularly handy in my office when patients are taking herbal medicines that are not included in the standard database of medications.

You may not find a medicine when you expect to. There are often empty choices in the database – for example, metoprolol succinate is empty – you have to specify metoprolol succinate ER to see the actual options. There are many examples of this – vitamin B12 has very few dosage options, but cyanocobalamin has many choices. Vitamin B6 has only a 250 mg dose, while pyridoxine has about 10-15 choices. If you don't find what you are looking for, try a different name for the medicine before you resort to creating a new CustomRx. CustomRx is filled with a lot of useless stuff.
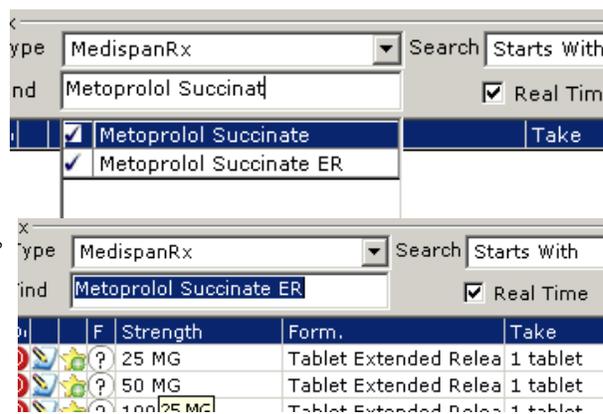
OK, so now you have found what you want to prescribe. You have a few options here as well. If you simply click anywhere on the bar for 10 MG, the script will drop down into your treatment plan as it says – Once a day, 30 days, #30, with nothing under refills. Note that you can also make it a favorite by hitting the little yellow star in the black box below.

D	Strength	Form.	Take	Route	Freq.	Duration	Disp	Refill	AWP($)
D	10 MG	Tablet	1 tablet	Orally	Once a day	30 day(s)	30		71.10
D	2.5 MG	Tablet	1 tablet	Orally	Once a day	30 day(s)	30		51.90
D	5 MG	Tablet	1 tablet	Orally	Once a day	30 day(s)	30		51.90
D		Powder	as directed						

If you click on the little pencil (in the black box above to the left), it will open a screen that allows you to change the dose, the frequency, the duration, the number dispensed and the refills (seen below).

The last 2 areas require you to click the little upside-down triangle (called a caret) and use a keypad to enter the numbers – quite annoying. Once you have what you want, hit "Apply" - but if you use this medicine often, "Add as Favorite" before hitting "Apply" - it will make your life a bit easier in the future.

Some doctors hate this screen, and prefer to just get the medicine in their note and adjust the refills/frequency/etc from there. Once the med is in your note, unclick your "Pop Up" box (black circle below). Now you can enter the details of the med (the black rectangle below) without popping back up into the screen above. From here, you can just tab across the script and change things. This is much easier than using the little keypad in the other screen. Note that whenever you see this "Pop Up" button in ECW – like in the VS area – it allows you two different ways to do the same thing. Try both ways and find what works best for you.

Now you can send the script. In most cases, send it by using the "ePrescribe Rx" choice – meaningful use requires that most scripts are sent electronically. For controlled substances, you will still need to print the prescription and sign it.

To simply refill meds from the "Treatment" screen, choose the "Cur Rx" button to the left of the "Add" button. You can also simply change tabs in the "Manage Orders" screen from "Add New Rx" to "Medication Summary". From this screen (seen to the right), you can choose "R" which refills for 30 days with 1 RF, or "30", which does the same thing, or "90" which refills for 90 days with 1 RF. If you make a mistake, you can hit the red minus sign next to the meds (seen to the right) to remove them. Once they drop into your treatment screen, you can alter the number of pills dispensed, the instructions and the number of refills as described earlier.
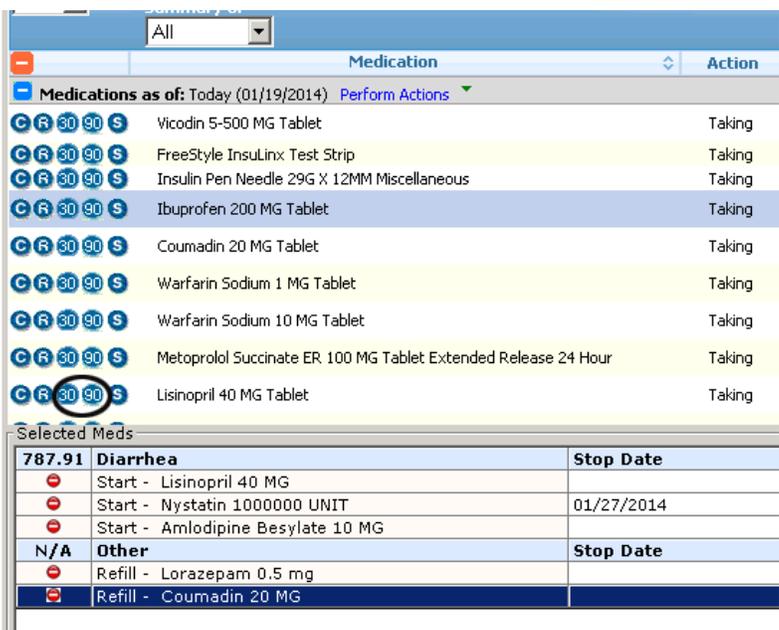
There is a very nice trick that one of the good trainers showed me. From the "Manage Orders" screen (entered by clicking "Add" from the Treatment section of the note), choose "My Favorites" and then type "SHIFT-5-6-7" (that is, press the shift key and type 5, 6, 7, which is %, ^, & on the keyboard) – and all your saved favorites will appear. Scroll through them by using the "Next" button. This is a nice way to see if you have duplicates, or to simply access your favorites when prescribing.
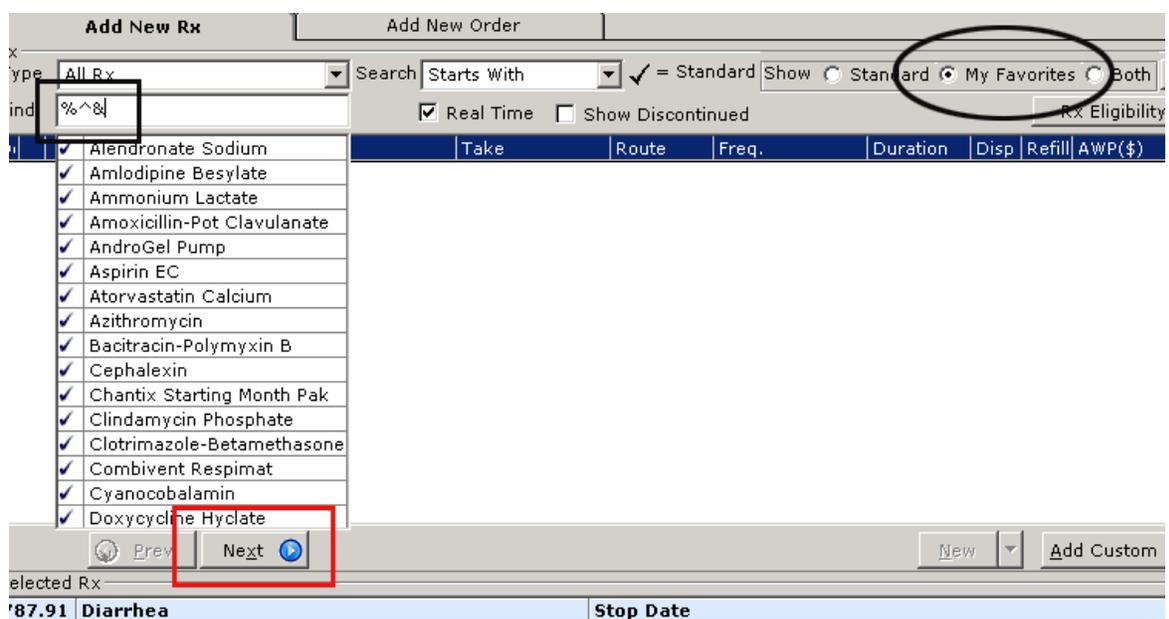
This medication primer has gotten much longer than I expected. There are other tricks and tips about medication prescribing, but this newsletter covers the basics and a bit more. I hope you find it useful.

Brad Kney, MD