

1806: Private importation of drugs, cosmetics, etc.

The Act on Securing Quality, Efficacy and Safety of Pharmaceuticals, Medical Devices, Regenerative and Cellular Therapy Products, Gene Therapy Products, and Cosmetics Law provides that the importation of drugs, quasi-drugs, cosmetics or medical equipments for the purpose of business activities is only granted for those persons who have the business license for importation and sale of those goods issued by the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare.

However, when you desire to privately import those goods for your personal use or consumption, importation shall be granted without the said license, provided that the import volume is within a permitted scope. See below for specific permitted scopes.

○Drugs and quasi-drugs

Volume of two-month's consumption or less (Within one-month's consumption or less, in case of poisons, deadly poisons and prescription drugs)

* 24 pieces or less of normal sizes per item, in case of medicines for external use (excluding poisons, deadly poisons, special instruction-required medicines, buccals, troches and suppositories)

In addition, no product containing the designated pharmaceutical ingredients, which is sold in foreign countries/regions with advertisement on enhancing cerebral function and other mental effects, shall be imported, unless use of such a product is complying with doctor's prescription or instruction. However, it would be permissible for foreign travelers to bring such a medicinal product into Japan by his/her self, in the purpose of self-medication during his/her stay

○Cosmetics

24 pieces or less of normal sizes per item

○Medical equipments

- 1) Minimum unit (one unit), as far as they are for home use by the non-licensed general public ex. electric massage equipment, low frequency therapy apparatus
- 2) contact lenses (Within two-month's consumption in case of disposable contact lenses)

Please note that body (hand) soaps, shampoos, toothpastes, hair dye, bath preparations, etc. fall under the category of quasi-drugs or cosmetics. Also, veterinary drugs, etc. are subject to import restrictions in accordance with the Act on Securing Quality, Efficacy and Safety of Pharmaceuticals, Medical Devices, Regenerative and Cellular Therapy Products, Gene Therapy Products, and Cosmetics Law. For information on the outline of the Act on Securing Quality, Efficacy and Safety of Pharmaceuticals, Medical Devices, Regenerative and Cellular Therapy Products, Gene Therapy Products, and Cosmetics Law, please refer to the code #1805 "Requirement of the Customs confirmation concerning import restrictions in accordance with the Act on Securing Quality, Efficacy and Safety of Pharmaceuticals, Medical Devices, Regenerative and Cellular Therapy Products, Gene Therapy Products, and Cosmetics Law."

For more details, please contact a special pharmaceutical inspector in a Regional Bureau of Health and Welfare.

(Article 70 of the Customs Law, item 1, section 3, paragraph 70 of the General Notification of the Customs Law, and Article 12 of the Act on Securing Quality, Efficacy and Safety of Pharmaceuticals, Medical Devices, Regenerative and Cellular Therapy Products, Gene Therapy Products, and Cosmetics Law)

[Inquiries]

(Items imported within the jurisdictional district of Hakodate/Tokyo/Yokohama Customs)

Kanto-Shinetsu Regional Bureau of Health and Welfare Tel: +81-48-740-0800

(Items imported within the jurisdictional district of Nagoya Customs and to the west)

Kinki Regional Bureau of Health and Welfare Tel: +81-6-6942-4096

[Reference] Website of Regional Bureau of Health and Welfare
<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/health-medical/pharmaceuticals/01.html>

[Inquiries on pharmaceutical for animal treatment/diagnosis]
Animal Products Safety Division, Food Safety and Consumer Affairs,
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
Tel: +81-3-3502-8111 (ex 4531)

[Reference] Website of Animal Products Safety Division, Food Safety and Consumer
Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
http://www.maff.go.jp/j/syouan/tikusui/yakuzi/y_import/kakunin.html
(in Japanese)