

Patient Information Leaflet for Unlicensed Medicines

Pharmacy Clinical Support Services

The name of your unlicensed medicine is



This leaflet has been designed to give you important information and to answer some common queries you may have.

Information for patients and visitors

Why there is a need for this leaflet?

In the UK most medicines are 'licensed' but some are not. This leaflet explains why medicines are licensed and why some useful medicines do not have licences.

You will have been given this leaflet by your doctor or pharmacist because the medicine prescribed for you is not 'licensed' nor is being used for a reason not covered by the licence. We want to reassure you that we have thought very carefully about the best medicine for you. This leaflet should answer some of the questions you may have.

What are unlicensed medicines?

The makers of medicines must ask the Government for a 'Product Licence' if they want to sell their medicines in the UK. They show the Government's Medicines Control Agency that their medicine works for the illness to be treated, the side effects that may be expected and that it has been made to a high standard.

How are medicines tested?

To be sure that a medicine works and is safe, the maker has to try it first on a number of people in what is called a 'clinical trial'. Information from clinical trials is given to the Medicines Control Agency when the maker asks for a Product Licence.

Why don't all medicines have a licence?

There are several reasons why some medicines are used for illnesses or conditions not covered by their original licence, for example:

- It is waiting the granting of a UK licence from the Government
- No UK company supplies the medicine
- It is undergoing a clinical trial
- Usage of the medicine is low and therefore it is not economic for the makers to send the product for approval or it would be difficult to get enough patients to do a clinical trial
- It has been withdrawn from the UK market

How will I know that my medicine is not licensed?

Your doctor may tell you whether the medicines they are prescribing are unlicensed or you may notice that the information leaflet given with the medicine doesn't refer to your particular condition or illness.

Information for patients and visitors

How do I know that these medicines are safe and will work?

This medicine will have been recommended by another doctor who is an expert, or your own doctor who will have read information that says it is the best one for you. The use of a medicine which is unlicensed or which is outside the terms of its Product Licence may not carry any increased risks. Often, these medicines have been widely used and have predictable side-effects which are no greater than licensed alternatives.

Should I be worried about taking these medicines?

If you are still worried after reading this leaflet, please talk to your doctor or pharmacist. They are looking after you and have thought carefully about the best medicine for you.

Where do I obtain further supplies of unlicensed medicines?

Your GP may or may not be prepared to continue supply of an unlicensed medicine. They are not obliged to. In the event of the latter, further supplies may be obtained by contacting your hospital prescriber to provide another prescription to be dispensed by the hospital pharmacy department.

What to do if I want more information?

Please talk to your doctor or hospital pharmacist on the Pharmacy Department numbers below

Produced by

Pharmacy Department

Northern Lincolnshire & Goole NHS Foundation Trust

Tel No 03033 304497 (Grimsby)

Tel No 03033 302391 (Scunthorpe)

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service offers confidential advice, support and information on any health related matters.

If you have a comment, concern, complaint or compliment about the care or service you have received from the Trust you can contact the PALS team as follows:

Telephone: 03033 306518

Email: nlg-tr.PALS@nhs.net

There are also offices at both the Diana Princess of Wales Hospital (near the main entrance) and Scunthorpe General Hospital (on the C Floor, near the outpatient department), should you wish to visit.

Please note: PALS should not be contacted for clinical advice relating to the content of this leaflet. The service should be contacted directly in the first instance.



Information for patients and visitors

Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust

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Date of Issue: May, 2018

Review Period: May, 2021

Author: Pharmacy

IFP-0711 v1.2

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