

PATIENT INFORMATION

Use of Unlicensed Medicines

What is this leaflet about?

You have been given this leaflet because a medicine you have been prescribed does not have a licence, known as a marketing authorisation, issued by the Medicine and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). **This leaflet is intended to reassure you that we have thought very carefully about the best medicine for you** and to help answer any questions that you may have. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist if there is anything further that you would like to know.

Pharmaceutical companies must hold a marketing authorisation, also known as a licence, for each medicine that they sell in the United Kingdom. The MHRA issue these licences only after they have assessed information on the quality, safety and efficacy of the medicine.

Why don't all medicines have licences?

There are a number of reasons why a medicine may not have a licence, or marketing authorisation, for example:

- It is currently undergoing clinical trials, but does not yet have a licence
- The medicine used to be licensed in the UK, but is no longer available
- It is only available from abroad and needs to be imported
- Usage of the medicine is low and it is too expensive or too difficult to have a clinical trial
- The medicine needs to be made specially

Why have I been given an unlicensed medicine?

You have been prescribed an unlicensed medicine because no suitable licensed alternative is available to treat your condition. However, the person treating you will have thought very carefully about prescribing the most appropriate medicine for you and its use will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Should I be worried about taking unlicensed medicines?

The prescriber will have explained to you why they think that this medicine is the right one for you. If you are worried about taking this medicine, talk to your doctor or pharmacist about your concerns. They may be able to give you further information or help to put you in touch with a support group for your illness or condition.

If you do experience any unpleasant or unexpected effects whilst taking the medicine, you should report this to your doctor or pharmacist.

What else do I need to know?

Sometimes it will take longer for the pharmacist to order in an unlicensed medicine. In which case, you will need to allow one or two weeks for the pharmacist to obtain further supplies of your medicine. You should bear this in mind, if you need to get a repeat prescription from your doctor.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like to discuss any information contained in this leaflet, please speak to your community pharmacist or contact your GP. Alternatively you can contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).

If you would like some help in accessing this document please email derbyshirepals@gemcsu.nhs.uk or call the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0800 032 32 35