

## Protecting yourself from counterfeits

Patients should only purchase medicines from suppliers to whom they can entrust their health to!

### // **Avoid purchasing medicines from private individuals:**

Buy your medication only from a pharmacy you trust and do not accept medicines from friends. Be especially careful of “cheap drugs”. Inquire about the source from where it has been purchased.

### // **Do not buy medicines “through the backdoor”:**

Certain drugs such as those against erectile dysfunction can only be purchased with a prescription. Thus, you should not purchase such medications that are readily sold via the Internet, at certain hotspots such as discos, red-light districts or gyms. Otherwise you are endangering your health!

### // **Treat vendors offering prescription medicines over the counter with caution:**

Many providers sell prescription medicines without the required prescription from the doctor. In most cases, you can be sure the medication is counterfeited.

### // **Do not accept packaging that is incomplete or not correctly configured for retail in your country:**

Most countries have defined specific rules for how medication can be sold. Often, single tablets that are packed in plastic bags or simple blister packages are illegal as product without patient information leaflets are. If you have any doubts, please consult your doctor, pharmacist or manufacturer of the original product.

### // **Plan ahead and take any medication you may need with you when travelling abroad:**

Compile your personal medication kit at home with the help of your doctor or pharmacist and ensure you take sufficient quantities with you.

## Helpful addresses and links

### European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)

Brussels, Belgium  
Phone: +32 2 6262555  
[www.efpia.eu](http://www.efpia.eu)

### European Alliance for Access to Safe Medicines (EAASM)

London, United Kingdom  
Phone: +44 7901 800608  
[www.eaasm.eu](http://www.eaasm.eu)

### International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations (IFPMA)

Geneva, Switzerland  
Phone: +41 22 33832-00  
[www.ifpma.org](http://www.ifpma.org)  
[www.fightthefakes.com](http://www.fightthefakes.com)

### World Health Organization (WHO)

Geneva, Switzerland  
Phone: +41 22 791-2111  
[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)



### Bayer Customer Hotline

Tel.: +49 800 100 61 19  
Fax: +49 180 120 01 01

### Website

[www.beware-of-counterfeits.com](http://www.beware-of-counterfeits.com)

### Contact

[www.bayer.com](http://www.bayer.com)  
or directly via the contact form provided on the website  
[www.beware-of-counterfeits.com](http://www.beware-of-counterfeits.com)

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### How to protect yourself

In the past few years, counterfeit medicines have become a serious issue on a global scale. Many dubious sites on the internet have exacerbated the situation. Even though the health systems in many countries can be considered safe, dangers lurk here as well.

Therefore, it is important to purchase your medication only in a pharmacy you trust. Please be wary if your medicines seem different from usual, for example, packaging or tablet form, and contact your doctor, pharmacist or manufacturer of the original product.

Taking medication with nonconforming dosage, no or the wrong active ingredient can be a serious health hazard and even become life-threatening for the consumer.

This brochure will highlight important aspects of how to protect yourself from counterfeit medications.

**Should you ever doubt the authenticity of your medication, please consult your doctor, pharmacist or manufacturer of the original product!**

Science for a better life

## Giving counterfeits no chances

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations (IFPMA) describe counterfeits as drugs which have been falsely labelled regarding their identity and/or origin to deliberately deceive customers.

Examples for counterfeited drugs are medications that

- // contain the active ingredient, however, either at a too high or too low dosage,
- // have manipulated expiry dates,
- // possess no active ingredients,
- // contain another active ingredient than specified, or
- // are wrapped in forged packaging, blisters and/or contain fake patient information.

In the best case, these counterfeits will neither show any effects nor improve health. However, they can also lead to therapy failure, cause side-effects or may even contain poisonous substances.

Usually, crime rings are the ones who manufacture and distribute counterfeit drugs. They can professionally imitate packages, tablets, solutions or injections. You therefore cannot always distinguish the real medication from its fake counterpart.

Especially expensive medications are lucrative for criminals, for example, drugs used in cancer therapy, those prescribed against erectile dysfunction or to lose weight as well as further products with high sales volumes. Often, these products are also offered as equivalents to original drugs and their active ingredients. These “pseudo generics” are, however, not true generics. Real generics are produced by reputable manufacturers after the patent of the original medication has expired and are of comparable quality to the original product.



## Scrutinizing online vendors

**The internet is the main source for counterfeit medications. But also, medicines purchased abroad during vacation, for example at market stalls, can be dangerous. Dubious suppliers are not always recognizable at first sight.**

If criminal organizations offer prescription drugs over the internet without requiring a doctor's prescription and claim their medication is equivalent to an original product you know, you should be very cautious.

You can get support from different organizations that will help you gather more information on the authenticity and integrity of online pharmacies. Many countries keep a list of certified pharmacies. For example, in the European Union, a uniform safety logo for legitimate European online pharmacies protects you.

The green EU logo is provided with the respective national flag. The use of the logo is mandatory for all mail order pharmacies within the EU. Once you click on the EU logo you will get detailed information on the legitimacy of the mail order pharmacy by the respective national system.

In the USA, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) certifies trustworthy online pharmacies in course of its Digital Pharmacy Accreditation program, formerly VIPPS. A list of VIPPS accredited pharmacies is available at <https://nabp.pharmacy/programs/digital-pharmacy/accredited-facilities>.

To find trustworthy suppliers in your country, contact your local Ministry of Health.

Find more information on counterfeit medication at [www.beware-of-counterfeits.com](http://www.beware-of-counterfeits.com)

## Our commitment for your safety

Bayer has started its “Beware of Counterfeits” campaign to target the issue of counterfeited medicines. A close cooperation both with national and international authorities devoted to this problem contributes to its success.

The company's commitment is made up of different cross-functional measures which are all brought together under one roof. This way, Bayer protects both patients and products.

### // Investigational measures

In close coordination with public authorities, Bayer investigates specific cases and gathers relevant evidence.

### // Legal measures

If one or several perpetrators are identified, all possible actions by criminal and/or civil law are taken to bring them to justice – this is part of the “zero tolerance” policy.

### // Safety features

To protect products from being counterfeited, Bayer uses different technical methods. These features help patients recognize an original product – similar to bank notes. Inform yourself in the appropriate product brochures or via the website [www.beware-of-counterfeits.com](http://www.beware-of-counterfeits.com) on the specific security features of selected Bayer's products.

### // Cooperation with authorities

Without the combined efforts of the national competent health authorities, customs or criminal investigation departments, the company could not effectively go against counterfeiters. This cooperation is an important component of the cross-functional management at Bayer.

### // Educational work

You, as a patient, benefit from the profound knowledge at Bayer: The different awareness campaigns – for example [www.beware-of-counterfeits.com](http://www.beware-of-counterfeits.com) – help you to avoid counterfeit medicines whenever possible. In case of any questions, please feel free to contact us any time (contact details on the back of this brochure).