COUNTERFEITING IT'S MEDICINES TOO

WHAT IS A FALSIFIED MEDICINE?

According to the World Health Organization (1), falsified medical products are those “that deliberately or fraudulently misrepresent their identity, composition or source”. When patients take falsified medicines, they run a risk of treatment failure, harmful effects and even death. To help protect patients from the worldwide trafficking of falsified medicines, Sanofi is taking action.

THE DANGERS FOR PATIENTS

Patients may fail to receive the treatment they need

Toxic substances are used, intake can result in death

Certain strains may develop resistance to treatments for infectious diseases (antibiotics, malaria drugs, etc.)

Exposure to viral or bacterial infections (sterile products, vaccines)

Some falsified medicines are nearly identical in appearance to genuine products and therefore can be very difficult to identify.

Especially if you purchased your medications on the Internet, talk to a pharmacist immediately if you have the slightest suspicion as to your medication, if it is not having the correct effect, if it is causing unexpected reactions.

WHAT MEDICATIONS ARE FALSIFIED?

Falsification touches all therapeutic domains and targets brands and generics alike.

These fake drugs are usually made by unqualified people, who may put too little or too much of the active ingredient, another ingredient or even toxic ingredients in them (WHO).

WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

75% of falsified medicines likely originate from India or China (1)

30 to 60% of falsified medicines likely circulating in southern countries (2)

128 countries likely affected by pharmaceutical crime (3)

1. WHO, 2017
2. WHO, 2011

SIMPLE MEASURES TO PROTECT YOURSELF

The Internet: more than 90% of online pharmacies are likely illicit (1)

4 TIPS TO REMAIN SAFE ON THE INTERNET (2):

- Be sure to buy medicines only from your country’s official online pharmacies. Your country’s health authorities likely publish a list of authorized online pharmacies. In Europe, legitimate online pharmacies display a clickable verification logo common to all EU Member States.

- Avoid websites that sell prescription medicines without asking you for your prescription (according to the country). An online questionnaire is not sufficient to diagnose an illness or determine a treatment for it.

- Look at the online pharmacy’s confidentiality and security policies; they should be easy to find and understand.

- Do not communicate any personal information (social security number, credit card number, medical history).

(1) OECD, 2016
(2) WHO, 2017
(3) Pharmaceutical Security Institute, 2015

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PREPARING FOR TRAVEL

In some regions of the world, falsified medicines are omnipresent on the streets, on market stands and even in certain unscrupulous pharmacies. Protect yourself by preparing your trip.

BEFORE YOUR TRIP ABROAD

Assemble a medications bag to take with you on your trip. Make sure that it contains enough doses for the entire time that you will be away, and don’t forget to include your prescriptions.

DURING YOUR TRIP

During your trip, should you have a medical problem, consult a doctor (embassies provide lists of local physicians) before buying any medicines, and do so in official distribution circuits.

APPLICATION MOBILE TRAVEL TIPS

Travel Tips is an application that provides information on the dangers of falsified medicines. It also supplies practical advice for before and during your trip.

Download the application before your trip!

SANOFI

54, rue La Boétie
75008 Paris - France
www.sanofi.com