

Medicine information leaflets for consumers

Summary

- A consumer medicine information (CMI) leaflet gives you important information about your medication.
- CMIs are available for any medication prescribed by your doctor or for medication available only at a pharmacy.
- Read the CMI before you begin taking your medication to learn about how to safely take your medication and about possible side effects and interactions with other substances.
- The format of a CMI is standard for every medication, so it is easier for you to find and understand any information.
- Check inside the medication box for a CMI leaflet, download one or ask your pharmacist to print one for you.

A Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) leaflet gives you important information about your medication. CMIs are available for any medication prescribed by your doctor or for medication available only from a pharmacy. CMIs are not available for medications sold generally through other outlets such as supermarkets.

Reading the CMI will help you to understand how to safely take your medication and will give you information about possible side effects and interactions with other substances.

You can search for CMIs online, or you can ask your pharmacist to print a copy.

Purpose of a CMI leaflet

A CMI is designed to give you accurate information about the safety of your medication and how best to take it. The pharmaceutical company that makes the medication writes the CMI and must follow government guidelines. This makes sure that the information is accurate and is written using language that consumers can understand.

A typical CMI contains...

- accurate and up-to-date
- clear headings
- simple instructions
- straightforward explanations of what consumers need to do
- easy for consumers to use.

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PRODUCT X[®]

Generic name

Consumer Medicine Information

Name of consumer
Address of consumer

<p>What is in this leaflet</p> <p>This leaflet answers some of the common questions people ask about Product X. It does not contain all the information that is known about Product X.</p> <p>...</p>	<p>Using Product X</p> <p><i>How to take it</i></p> <p>This section tells the consumer the directions for taking the medication.</p> <p>...</p> <p><i>If you forget to take it</i></p> <p>This section tells the consumer what to do if they forget to take the medication.</p> <p>...</p> <p><i>Overdose</i></p> <p>This section tells the consumer what to do if they take too much of the medication.</p> <p>...</p>	<p>Side effects</p> <p>This section tells the consumer of the possible side effects that may occur while taking the medication.</p> <p>...</p> <p>After using it</p> <p>Storage</p> <p>This section tells the consumer how to properly store the medication.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Disposal</p> <p>This section tells the consumer what to do if they have tablets left over.</p> <p>...</p>
<p>What Product X is for</p> <p>This section describes for the consumer what symptoms the drug is used for. It also describes how the drug works and the importance of the instructions.</p> <p>...</p>	<p>While you are using Product X</p> <p><i>Things you must do</i></p> <p>This section tells the consumer things you should do while taking the medication.</p> <p>...</p> <p><i>Things you must not do</i></p> <p>This section tells the consumer things they must not do while taking the medication.</p> <p>...</p> <p><i>Things to be careful of</i></p> <p>This section tells the consumer what they should be careful of while taking the medication.</p> <p>...</p>	<p>Product description</p> <p><i>What Product X looks like</i></p> <p>This section describes what the medication looks like.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Ingredients</p> <p>This section tells the consumer what is in the medication.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Manufacturer</p>

Before you use Product X

When you must not use it

This section tells the consumer when the drug shouldn't be taken.

...

Before you start to use it

This section tells the consumer what they must tell their doctor.

...

Taking other medicines

This section tells the consumer that they should tell their doctor about other medications.

...



Image from: *Using Consumer Medicine Information (CMI): a guide for consumers and health professionals*. Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, Canberra: 2000.

Using a CMI leaflet

Make sure you have the correct CMI for your medication. Some medication is available in different formulations and each will have its own CMI. The exact brand name is written on the top of the leaflet in large letters and should match the brand name on the box.

Read the CMI before you begin taking your medication so you are well prepared. You may also refer to the CMI during treatment to check for side effects and possible interactions with other medications or substances, such as alcohol. You can also find out what to do if you miss a dose.

You should speak with your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about your medication or how to read the CMI. Do not vary your dose or make treatment decisions based on your own reading of the CMI.

All CMIs are set out in the same way and include information such as:

- brand name – appears at the top in large letters
- active ingredient – the main ingredient in the medication appears under the brand name
- all ingredients of the medication, including non-active ingredients (such as binders or tablet coatings)
- contact details for the manufacturer
- how to take the medication – including what to do if you take too much or miss a dose
- information to consider before you use the medication – including possible interactions with other medication or substances
- safe storage and disposal information
- what can happen while you are taking the medication – including side effects
- what the medication is used for
- contraindications – certain reasons when not to take a medication (for example, some medication is not recommended for pregnant women or children under a certain age). Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you have any concerns.

Finding a CMI leaflet

You can find the CMI for your medication in a number of ways, including:

- Search for a **CMI leaflet on Healthdirect**.
- Ask your pharmacist to print a copy for you.
- Check inside the medication box.
- Contact the pharmaceutical company that made the medication.
- Call Medicines Line (Australia) on 1300 MEDICINE (633 424) for information on prescription medication and over-the-counter or complementary medicines.
- Search and download CMIs for prescription medication and pharmacy-only medication from **NPS**

MedicineWise Medicine Finder.

- Search and download CMIs for prescription medication from the **Australian Therapeutic Goods**

Administration.

Where to get help

betterhealth.vic.gov.au

- Your doctor
- Pharmacist
- Medicines Line (Australia) Tel. 1300 MEDICINE (1300 633 424) – for information on prescription, over-the-counter and complementary medicines

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Better Health Channel

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