

# RAISING AWARENESS – AVOIDING UNAUTHORIZED HEALTH PRODUCTS ONLINE



## RISKS OF BUYING HEALTH PRODUCTS ONLINE

Buying health products, such as drugs, online from non-legitimate sources may pose serious health risks. You may receive unauthorized drugs that have not been reviewed for safety or efficacy by Health Canada. In addition, the drugs you receive may be counterfeit, have no active ingredients, contain unknown or wrong ingredients, dangerous additives, or be past their expiry date. Even if these drugs do not harm you directly or immediately, your condition may get worse without effective treatment. If you are planning to buy drugs online, Health Canada has information on the risks of **buying drugs over the internet**:



## WHAT YOU CAN DO WHEN BUYING HEALTH PRODUCTS



Look for health products that have been authorized by Health Canada. Authorized health products have an eight-digit Drug Identification Number (DIN), Natural Product Number (NPN) or Homeopathic Medicine Number (DIN-HM), as well as a licence number for medical devices. Consumers can also check whether the health product has been authorized for sale by searching the applicable Health Canada's databases below:

### Drug Product Database (DPD):



### Licensed Natural Health Products Database (LNHPD):



### Medical Devices Active Licence Listing (MDALL):



Avoid buying health products from questionable or untrustworthy websites. An online pharmacy may be fraudulent if it:

- Does not require a valid prescription.
- Can ship medicines worldwide.
- Is not licensed by a provincial or territorial pharmacy regulatory authority in Canada.
- Does not provide a street address located in Canada.
- Offers health products at very low and discounted prices.
- Does not accept credit cards or only accepts money orders or cryptocurrency as payment.
- Ships health products with labels different from those that would be received at a local pharmacy. For example, the packaging is in a foreign language or has no expiration date.
- Makes repeated spelling and grammatical mistakes on the website, in email communications, or on the product packaging.
- Sends unsolicited emails. These communications may cater to a specific condition or treatment.

For more information on **choosing a safe online pharmacy**:





Consult your healthcare professional if you have questions or concerns about a health product you are using, and for advice on which health products are best for you and your family.



**File a health product complaint** through this link:



**Report side effects or adverse events** involving the use of a health product through this link:



Check **Health Canada's Recalls and Safety Alerts database** for advisories on illegal health products that have been found on the Canadian market:



Check **Health Canada's list of certain unauthorized health products** for regular updates:



## **IMPORTING HEALTH PRODUCTS INTO CANADA FOR PERSONAL USE**

For information on the personal importation of health products, see **Health Canada's GUI-0116**:

