

Patient information

Unlicensed Medicine and Specials

Most medicines have a licence, which means that they have gone through successful clinical trials on people. However, not all medicines are licensed. This is because licensing a medicine is an expensive process and if there is not a high demand for them, it wouldn't be financially practical for the manufacturer. Unlicensed medicines are made up of well known medicinal ingredients that can, sometimes, just be mixed in a different way.

A 'Special' is an unlicensed medicine that has been made especially to suit your needs. Your doctor will tell you if he has prescribed you or your child a Special and they will also tell you why. You may have been prescribed a Special for a number of different reasons; however it will be because there is no licensed alternative that is suitable to help treat you. It may be that you're allergic to the medicine, that the medicine you need currently unavailable or maybe you have difficulty swallowing tablets.

Manufacturers

The doctor who has prescribed your medicine will tell the pharmacist what needs to be in the medicine for your treatment. In most cases the pharmacist will order your medicine from a 'Specials manufacturer' who will hold a Specials Licence. Manufacturers who hold a licence have proved that the products they produce are safe and to a high quality.

Your Tailored Medicine

Your medicine will have been prescribed to you by a doctor and prepared by a Specials manufacturer. In order for the medicine to be effective you must follow the instructions accompanying it, including when and how often you should take it.

As with any medicine, licensed or unlicensed, there are occasionally side effects. If you have any serious side effects or reactions, it is important that you contact your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible. They have a duty of care to you and will need to know this information to help care for you.





Association of Pharmaceutical
Specials Manufacturers

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Your doctor and pharmacist will do their utmost to ensure you get your medicine as speedily as possible, however because it is made to order you might have to collect it the following day. The code of ethics says that the patient is the first concern to a doctor or pharmacist, so they need to be sure that the quality, safety and effectiveness is top notch before they pass it on to you.

More Information

If you have any questions regarding your medication then always discuss these with your doctor or pharmacist who will be happy to help.

