

Looks can be deceiving.

**The medicine you buy from
outside the United States
may be unsafe or ineffective.**

Don't risk your health.



**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Food and Drug Administration**

**www.fda.gov/importeddrugs
1-888-INFO-FDA**

Things you should know about buying medicines from outside the United States

If you buy foreign medicine from an Internet site, from a storefront business that offers to order medicine for you, or during visits outside the United States, you are taking a risk. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) cannot guarantee the safety of these medicines.

- **QUALITY ASSURANCE CONCERNS.** Medicines that have not been approved for sale in the United States may not have been manufactured under quality assurance procedures designed to produce a safe and effective product.
- **COUNTERFEIT POTENTIAL.** Some imported medicines—even those that bear the name of a U.S.-approved product—may, in fact, be fake versions that are unsafe or even completely ineffective.
- **PRESENCE OF UNTESTED SUBSTANCES.** Some imported medicines and their ingredients, although legal in foreign countries, may not have been evaluated for safety and effectiveness in the United States. These products may be addictive or contain other dangerous ingredients.
- **RISKS OF UNSUPERVISED USE.** Some medicines, whether imported or not, are unsafe when taken without proper medical supervision. You may need a medical evaluation to ensure that the medicine is appropriate for you and your condition. Or, you may require medical checkups to make sure that you are taking the medicine properly, it is working for you, and that you are not having unexpected or life-threatening side effects.
- **LABELING AND LANGUAGE ISSUES.** The medicine's label, including instructions for use and possible side effects, may be in a language you do not understand and may make medical claims or suggest specific uses that have not been properly evaluated for safety and effectiveness.
- **LACK OF INFORMATION.** An imported medicine may lack information that you would need to be promptly and correctly treated for dangerous side effects caused by the medicine.

Remember, medicines you buy from outside the U.S. may be unsafe or ineffective.

It's not worth risking your health!

If you have any questions about the use of any medicines, FDA encourages you to contact your physician, your local pharmacist, or the board of pharmacy for the state in which you live.