



Consumer medicines information

—reliable information

Having access to reliable information about the medications you take will not only help you better understand their actions, but also equip you to play a bigger role in the management of your own health. That's why the Pharmacy Guild of Australia encourages consumers to **'Ask Your Pharmacist'** for more facts, especially in the form of a Consumer Medicines Information (CMI) flyer.



How often do you leave the doctor's surgery feeling overwhelmed?

You may have been discharged from hospital or started on a new medicine. It's easy to forget large amounts of information, especially when you aren't feeling well. The best thing about a CMI is that you can take it home and read it at your leisure. It might even jog your memory about something you may have forgotten to tell your GP, which can then help you to avoid potential problems and achieve a better health outcome.

Ask for a Consumer Medicine Information (CMI)

When you would like more information about your medicines, simply ask for a Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) leaflet from your local community pharmacy. Provided free of charge to pharmacy customers, CMIs are reader-friendly documents that provide information about prescription medicines.

A CMI can be provided at any time: when someone is starting a new medicine for the first time or whenever a customer asks for it.

What a CMI contains

Consumer Medication Information brochures are written in plain English by the pharmaceutical company that makes the medicine. They answer common questions about the medicine, including

- what it is for
- how to use it properly
- things to consider before taking it
- if there are any known side effects.

The CMI has a standard format that includes clear headings in a logical sequence. It contains simple instructions and straightforward explanations of what you need to do to get the best results from your medicine. The CMI is designed to help you locate the information you need easily, without having to search.

The CMI will tell you:

- Who should not take the medicine
- What to tell your doctor before you start taking the medicine
- Which other medicines may interfere with your medicine
- How to take the medicine
- What to do if you forget to take the medicine
- What to do if you take too much medicine by mistake
- Things that you must or must not do while taking the medicine
- Things to be careful of, such as driving or drinking alcohol
- Symptoms and signs of possible side effects to watch for
- The ingredients in the medicine



Medicine information online

With the rise of the internet, people can find a vast range of information at home, but there is a need for caution when dealing with issues relating to health. The best way to guarantee you are getting reliable information about your medicines is to ask your pharmacist for a CMI.

One website that can be relied upon for authentic and trustworthy information on medicines is www.medicines.org.au. At this website, you can find CMIs for most of the prescription medicines available in Australia.

CMIs are available in several accessible formats. On the website www.medicines.org.au CMIs are now displayed in user friendly formats for easier reading online. For printing, there is both 3 column formats and a large print format available. In the near future, audio files for online listening will be available for downloading. Braille format files will also be made available in the future.*

While CMIs are a valuable resource, reading one does not take the place of counselling by a health professional. It is still important to talk to your doctor or pharmacist about your health and medicines.

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