

# Internet & fake medicines

## How can I buy safely online?

Internet has become one of the preferred vehicles of criminals for the circulation of falsified medicines.

**96%**

of online pharmacies are illicit.\*

**97%**

of these illicit online pharmacies are part of an **affiliate marketing network.\*\***

More than  
**50%**

of medicines sold illegally online are **falsified or substandard medicines.\*\*\***



Falsified medicines: a **real danger** for patients' health.

They may contain:

- **No active ingredient, wrong active ingredient or wrong quantity.**
- Toxic ingredients: **arsenic, mercury, anti-freeze, etc.**

In the European Union, to stay safe when buying medicines online, look for this logo



### DOs

Before buying, check if:

- Buying medicines online is authorized in your country. (Is it only for over-the-counter medicines?)
- The pharmacy/seller is authorized by your national health authorities.
- Privacy and security policies are easy to find and to understand/accessible and clear.

### DON'Ts

Do not buy if:

- The pharmacy sells prescription drugs without asking for a prescription.
- The product's description is too enticing (over-promising results, exaggeratedly high or low price, etc.).
- The site offers free medicinal products.

### GENERAL ADVICE

Update your internet navigator regularly (it could help detect suspicious websites).  
Report any suspicion to your local health authority and to the pharmaceutical company's hotline.

\*<https://buysaferx.pharmacy/> - \*\*LegitScript in January 2016 - \*\*\*<https://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/88/4/10-020410/en/>  
A falsified medicine deliberately misrepresents its identity & a substandard medicine fails to meet quality standards or qualifications. (WHO)