

Counterfeit medicines

A counterfeit medicine is one which is deliberately and fraudulently mislabeled with respect to identity and/or source. Counterfeiting can apply to both branded and generic products, and counterfeit products may include products with the correct ingredients or with the wrong ingredients, without active ingredients, with insufficient active ingredients or with fake packaging. Counterfeit medicines represent a serious and growing problem for patients and pharmaceutical manufacturers alike. For patients, who are generally unable to distinguish between authentic and counterfeit products, the health risks are enormous. Solving the counterfeiting issue requires sustained commitment not only from national governments, but also the pharmaceutical industry and other healthcare stakeholders such as licensed pharmaceutical distributors.

Novartis Position

Novartis is committed to working with national governments to prevent and prosecute the production or sale of counterfeit medicines. This is a longstanding commitment that is consistent with our overall concern for the health and safety of patients who use our products, as well as for the public health generally. The integrity and reputation of the Novartis brand depends upon our ability to assure patients that products which bear our name are, in fact, our products, backed by superior, unwavering standards of quality, safety and efficacy.

Novartis is taking a diverse and multi-pronged approach to addressing the problem of counterfeit medicines. We investigate every reported case of counterfeited Novartis product, wherever it occurs, and maintain a global intelligence effort in order to identify, seize and destroy counterfeit Novartis products. We continuously monitor and improve the security of our distribution chain, as well as the security of the packaging of our products. We continuously apprise all Novartis companies of the dangers and complexities of counterfeiting; we actively participate in cooperative anti-counterfeiting efforts with groups representing our many industry and public health allies; we maintain an ongoing dialogue with health regulatory and law enforcement officials about the public health risks of counterfeit products and how they can be identified and seized; and we help governments develop and implement stronger laws, better enforcement and more severe penalties, and better public information.