



Fact Sheet Traditional Medications



Definition

All new drugs are reviewed by Health Canada before they appear on the market in Canada. They are assessed for their safety, efficacy and quality. Drug products are available by prescription or non-prescription. The company supplies extensive scientific data collected over many years on the drug's efficacy and safety. It takes many years from discovery to market a drug and most discoveries are not successful.

What is a DIN?

All drugs approved by Health Canada are assigned a Drug Identification Number (DIN). Look for the DIN on the product label. The Canadian Government lists a searchable database of all drug products marketed in Canada. [Drug Product Database: Access the database - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/drug-information/drug-product-database.html)

What does “Approved Indication for Use” mean?

An Indication is what the drug is used for. The approved indication is the indication/s that are officially approved by Health Canada.

What does “Contraindication” mean?

A Contraindication is when a drug should not be used.

What does “Off-label Use” mean?

Medications are often prescribed for uses not officially approved by Health Canada. These may be older drugs studied for new conditions since their initial approval, officially indicated in other countries, or supported by recent research. Sometimes, patients find a medication helpful for their condition, even if it's not officially indicated. Prescribers may consider off-label medication use for treating fibromyalgia symptoms. For example, gabapentin, which is officially approved for seizure control, is one such drug. Numerous other examples exist in the literature.



What is the FDA?

The FDA is the Food and Drug Administration and it is the equivalent to Health Canada in the United States. Information on the internet may be international and here in Canada much of the information is North American.

Approved Fibromyalgia drugs in the United States

In addition to pregabalin and duloxetine, milnacipran (Savella®) is marketed for fibromyalgia. Milnacipran is not available for fibromyalgia in Canada. Why not? Because the drug company did not submit data to Health Canada for review and approval.

Medications: Start Low, Go Slow



Possible Side-effects of Drugs

It is possible in your province that you may receive a phone call or a leaflet from your pharmacy with information about the drug and its side effects, especially if you've never taken the medication before. If you don't have all the information you require to make an informed decision about taking medication, be sure to contact your prescriber or pharmacist.

Everyone is different and each medication has its individual possible side effects and contraindications.

Things to Keep In Mind

- Keep all prescriptions at one pharmacy so the pharmacist can help watch for drug interactions/allergies.
- Keep a list of allergies and medication(s) on your person in case of emergency.
- Mention to your healthcare provider about the supplements you are taking. Always check with your prescriber and pharmacist.
- Some medications are effective for some and not for others.
- You are responsible for any medications you take. Ensure you know the side effects and the dosage you should be taking.



Asking questions about your medications is Self-Advocacy and Self-Empowering.





- 1 Pharmacy contact - address + phone
- 2 Date prescription filled
- 3 Pharmacy prescription number + prescriber's name
- 4 Patient name + instructions for taking the medication
- 5 Name, quantity, type and dose of medication + Health Canada drug identification number
- 6 Manufacturer code + number of refills on file at pharmacy
- 7 Netcare* tracking numbers

(*May not be seen in all provinces. May have different names in other provinces.)

