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.

A falsified medicine deliberately misrepresents its identity & a substandard medicine fails to meet quality standards or qualifications. (WHO)