



Fewer drugs make for a safer home medicine cabinet

Danielle can no longer get around so her doctor has come to see her at home. At the end of the visit, Danielle asks:

- Could you prescribe some headache pills for me too? I think I've run out.
- Are you sure? Shall I have a look in your medicine cabinet?

In fact, Danielle has enough headache remedies to treat a football team!

– Efferalgan^o effervescent tablets, Doliprane^o sachets, Dafalgan^o capsules, and even Panadol^o tablets! They may have different trade names, Danielle, and the boxes may be different, but the active ingredient is identical. Look! Here's the international nonproprietary name (INN): paracetamol. The INN is the drug's real name, but unfortunately it's printed in tiny letters. All those different products actually contain the same drug!

Danielle now looks for the INN on the boxes and leaflets of all her drugs. That way she's less likely to get mixed up when going through her medicine cabinet, and she'll save money too...

The INN system reduces the risk of confusion

The INN (International Nonproprietary Name) is quite simply a drug's real name. Created by the World Health Organization (WHO), the INN system is used throughout the world. It allows healthcare professionals and patients to identify a drug precisely and with confidence, and to avoid potentially serious adverse effects due to confusion between drugs. With the INN, everything is simpler, clearer and more precise.

Ask your doctor and pharmacist to explain the INN system



"The INN campaign: a drug's real name": explanations and other materials produced by the Medicines in Europe Forum are available from the following websites:

– Association Mieux Prescrire (www.prescrire.org)

– Fédération Nationale de la Mutualité Française (www.mutualite.fr)

– Union Fédérale des Consommateurs Que Choisir (www.quechoisir.org)

The INN, a drug's real name: leaflets are available to download for free at www.prescrire.org, along with explanations of the reasons for using the INN and the (rare) drawbacks.