



## Leo's spots: due to a drug

Leo is 10 years old. At the moment he's covered with itchy spots that kept him awake last night. His doctor remembers the treatment she prescribed a few days ago:

–This must be an allergic reaction to the antibiotic I prescribed for Leo's otitis. He must be careful to avoid this drug in the future. His next allergic reaction could be much more serious.

She adds:

–Be careful: like most drugs, this antibiotic is sold under several different brand names.

–But how can I know which is which? Leo's mother asks, a little anxiously.

–The best thing is to learn the international nonproprietary name, or INN, which is a drug's real name. It's generally printed in much smaller characters than the brand name. Here it is; can you see it?

The doctor writes down the INN of the antibiotic that caused Leo's allergic reaction in Leo's health notebook. This way his mother will be able to tell other doctors who treat Leo to avoid prescribing this drug.

### The INN helps to prevent allergic drug reactions

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](http://www.prescrire.org))

–Fédération Nationale de la Mutualité Française ([www.mutualite.fr](http://www.mutualite.fr))

–Union Fédérale des Consommateurs Que Choisir ([www.quechoisir.org](http://www.quechoisir.org))

The INN, a drug's real name: leaflets are available to download for free at

[www.prescrire.org](http://www.prescrire.org), along with explanations of the reasons for using the INN and the (rare) drawbacks.