



Medicines containing Animal Products or Alcohol





Why is this information important?

At Milton Keynes University Hospital, transparency and respect for patient beliefs and preferences are fundamental to the care we provide, and we are committed to patient choice around the ingredients of medication provided.

Some medicines we use contain animal derived ingredients or alcohol. This leaflet is for patients who wish to avoid such medicines due to religious, ethical, or personal reasons.

Medicines That May Contain Animal Products or Alcohol

Below are some examples of medicines that may contain animal-derived ingredients:

- **Blood Thinning Medicines** (Heparin-based) *
- **Animal-Derived Insulin** (Porcine/Bovine) *
- **Capsules** (Animal Gelatine) *
- **Some Vaccines** (e.g., MMR, Flu vaccine) ◇
- **Pancreatic Enzyme Supplements** ⊗
- **Medicines to Help Develop Premature Babies' Lungs** ⊗
- **Epoetins** (Used to Treat Anaemia) ⊗

Other Ingredients That May Be Animal-Derived:

- **Lactose** (from cow's milk)
- **Shellac** (from insects)
- **Stearic Acid** (sometimes from animals)

Some medicines may also contain **Ethyl Alcohol** which although not derived from animals, may not be acceptable to everyone because of religious reasons.

Key to symbols:

* *Alternatives Available* ◇ *Alternatives May Be Available* ⊗ *No Alternatives*

What Are the Alternatives?

In some cases, alternative medications may be available. However, they may not always be as effective.

- **Heparin:** Synthetic alternatives exist but must be discussed with a doctor.
- **Insulin:** Non-animal insulin is available but may require a different dose or monitoring.
- **Vaccines:** Some vaccines have non-porcine alternatives.
- **Gelatine Capsules:** Many medicines are available in tablet or syrup form.

What Can You Do?

- Discuss concerns with your doctor or pharmacist.
- Speak to the Chaplaincy Team for religious guidance.
- Consider available alternatives, if appropriate.

Where to Get More Information

Visit www.mkuh.nhs.uk for accessibility and translation services.



You can get further information from the patient information leaflet which comes with the medicine. *Section 6* of this information usually tells about the ingredients.



We encourage patients to be involved in their care by:

1. Being part of the conversation and shared decision making
2. Asking questions if something is not clear
3. Speaking up if you have concerns

Checks are there to protect you and you can be part of them. Behave with respect and kindness towards healthcare professionals.

For further information about the Medicines and their ingredients, please contact:

- Hospital Ward Pharmacist / Main Pharmacy
- BIMA (British Islamic Medical Association <https://britishima.org>)
- MKUH Chaplaincy Team (Contact: 01908 996061 or chaplaincy@mkuh.nhs.uk)

For vegan patients, additional guidance is available from:

- The Vegan Society (veganism and medications)

We ask for information about you so that you can receive proper care and treatment. This information remains confidential and is stored securely by the Trust in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018/GDPR. Further guidance can be found within our privacy notice found on our Trust website: www.mkuh.nhs.uk

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