

Suggested Expiry Dates of Medicinal Products Once Opened

Formulation Type	Expiry Details*	Comments
Tablets & Capsules In original blister strips or container with printed expiry date	Manufacturer's expiry date as printed on original box or individual foils (check patient information leaflet)	PRN (when required) medication, wherever possible, should be used from the manufacturer's original pack. (The expiry date is printed on each strip).
Tablets & Capsules Dispensed in amber bottles	6 months from date of dispensing	Or as advised by Pharmacy
Aspirin Dispersible Tablets Stored in amber bottles	1 month from date of dispensing	
Tablets & Capsules Stored in pharmacy packed blisters i.e. MDS	8 weeks from date of dispensing	
Oral liquids In original manufacturer's packaging or amber bottles	6 months from date of opening or follow manufacturer's guidance e.g., for specially manufactured items or expiry date on packaging. For antibiotics, check with community pharmacist if not clear from label.	Estimate the amount of any liquids carried over. Medicines retained for use should be recorded in the 'carried forward' section of the MAR chart.
Oral Liquids Dispensed in amber bottles	3 months from when the original bulk container was opened	The pharmacy should put an expiry date on the bottle before sending to the Home taking into account when opened in the pharmacy
External liquids (Lotions, shampoos & bath oils)	6 months from opening	Or manufacturer's recommendation if shorter
Creams, Ointments and Gels In tubes	3 months from date of opening or manufacturer's recommendations if shorter	Write the DATE and initial when opened on the dispensing label for audit trail purposes
Creams, Ointments and Gels in pots, tubs or jars	1 month from date of opening	If only using a small amount each month discuss with the prescriber about prescribing a smaller amount
Creams and Gels In pump dispensers	Manufacturer's expiry date	Is a sealed unit so can be used until Manufacturer's expiry date is reached
Sterile Eye/Ear/Nose drops/Ointments	28 days from date of opening	Care with items needing fridge storage and some such as Hylo-forte have longer expiry dates than 28 days
Rectal Diazepam	Individual Foil Wrapped Tubes	Manufacturer's expiry date
	Non-foil Wrapped	6 months from date of opening
SIP Feeds / Oral Supplementary Nutrition	Unopened, follow Manufacturer's expiry date.	Follow manufacturer's guidance once opened (most keep for 24 hours in fridge)
Inhalers	Manufacturer's expiry date	Some newer inhalers have a shortened expiry after dispensing or once opened, these should have a written expiry date by pharmacy
Glyceryl Trinitrate Sprays	Manufacturer's expiry date	
Insulin	Unopened: Manufacturer's expiry date when stored in a fridge at between 2°C and 8°C. Once opened: 4 weeks for insulin vials and pens unless otherwise stated. When in use can be kept at normal room temperature (i.e. less than 25°C).	One pen/ cartridge will often be sufficient per month. (A box of 5 will rarely be needed every month). Ask the G.P to prescribe the nearest number of pens/ cartridges needed per month to reduce stock piling.
Any product whose appearance suggests it may be unfit for use should be discarded. Irrespective of expiry date. If there is any doubt, contact the community pharmacy for advice.		

**unless otherwise stated by manufacturer and still within manufacturer's expiry date*