

# Expiry Dates 'After Opening'

Formulation and packaging	Suggested expiry once opened*	Comments
Tablets and capsules in the original container	Manufacturer's expiry date	
Tablets and capsules in patient compliance aids/ monitored dosage system (MDS)	8 weeks unless otherwise stated by the pharmacy	Limited stability data when packaged into MDS
Loose tablets and capsules i.e. dispensed into a bottle by the pharmacy	6 months from the date of dispensing unless otherwise stated by the pharmacy	
Liquids (internal)	6 months from date of opening unless otherwise stated by the manufacturer or pharmacy	To reduce the risk of contamination, any decanted, unused liquid should be disposed of and not returned to the container Stock balance of liquids should be routinely performed by a visual check
Liquids (external)	6 months from date of opening unless otherwise stated by the manufacturer or pharmacy	
Ointments and creams in tubes	3 months from the date of opening	
Ointments and creams in tubs with a lid (open top containers)	3 months from the date of opening	To reduce the risk of contamination, a clean spoon or spatula should be used to remove the required amount from the container
Ointments and creams in a pump dispenser	6 months from the date of opening	
Inhalers	Manufacturer's expiry date	Some inhalers have reduced expiry when stored at room temperature – always check manufacturer information
Eye /ear / nose drops and ointments	4 weeks from the date of opening unless otherwise stated by the manufacturer	
Ear / nose sprays	Manufacturer's expiry date	
Injections (except insulin)	Manufacturer's expiry date	
Insulin (pen / cartridge / vial)	4 weeks from the date of opening unless otherwise stated by manufacturer	Once in use, can be stored at room temperature below 25°C

\*If either the manufacturer's expiry date or the manufacturer's specified 'in use' expiry is shorter, this takes priority over the general guidance above.

**N.B. Any product, whose appearance suggests it is unfit for use e.g. an obvious damage to the container or contamination, irrespective of expiry date should be discarded as per local policy**