World Health Organization

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Medical Product Alert N° 3/2017

Falsified Avastin (bevacizumab) and Sutent (sunitinib malate) circulating in East Africa

This Medical Product Alert relates to two falsified medicines discovered by the National Drug Authority, Uganda and reported to WHO.

In July 2017 falsified versions of Avastin (bevacizumab) and Sutent (sunitinib malate) were seized by the National Drug Authority, Uganda. Both products were being distributed in the vicinity of various cancer treatment centres in Kampala, Uganda.

The genuine manufacturers of both products have confirmed that they did not manufacture these products.

Details and photographs of both falsified products are shown below:

1: Avastin (Bevacizumab) 400 mg	
Product Name	**Avastin**
Batch Number	NC 1060
Expiry Date	02 - 2019
Stated Active Pharmaceutical ingredient	Bevacizumab
Stated Manufacturer	Astrazeneca/AstraZenaca

Avastin is the trade name of a medicine manufactured by Roche/Genentech for the treatment of various cancers. It is not manufactured by AstraZeneca as stated on the falsified versions.

This falsified version of Avastin is being presented in plastic bottles containing blue/grey tablets. The genuine version of Avastin is supplied only as an injection for intravenous use.

Fig 1. Falsified Avastin

Fig 2. Falsified Avastin

2: Sutent (sunitinib malate) 12.5 mg	
Product Name	**Sutent**
Batch Number	NC 2001
Expiry Date	02 - 2019
Stated Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient	sunitinib malate
Stated Manufacturer	Astrazeneca/AstraZenaca

Sutent is the trade name of a medicine for the treatment of pancreatic cancer manufactured by Pfizer. It is not manufactured by AstraZeneca as shown on the falsified versions.

This falsified version of Sutent is presented in plastic bottles containing blue/grey tablets. Genuine Sutent is only available as gelatin capsules.

Fig 3. Falsified Sutent

Fig 4. Falsified Sutent

WHO requests increased vigilance within the supply chains of countries likely to be affected by these falsified products. Increased vigilance should include hospitals, clinics, health centres, wholesalers, distributors, pharmacies and any other suppliers of medical products.

If you are in possession of these products, please do not use them. If you have taken this falsified product, or if you suffer an adverse event having taken these products, please seek immediate advice from a qualified healthcare professional, and report the incident to your local Ministry of Health/National Medicines Regulatory Authorities/National Pharmacovigilance Centre.

It is necessary to ensure that all medical products are obtained from authentic and reliable sources. Their authenticity and condition should be carefully checked. Seek advice from a healthcare professional if there is any doubt.

National health authorities are asked to immediately notify WHO if these falsified products are discovered in their country. If you have any information concerning the manufacture, distribution, or supply of these products, please contact rapidalert@who.int

WHO Global Surveillance and Monitoring System on Substandard and Falsified Medical Products

For further information, please visit our website: http://www.who.int/medicines/regulation/ssffc/en/
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