

The Issue: Family Tradenames

Over-the-Counter Brand Name Extensions: Family Tradenames

Over-the-counter (OTC) medication manufacturers can cause confusion when they extend the use of popular brand names within a line of products.

The same brand name has been used for products with opposing indications (for example, Kaopectate® products).

Many of these brand name extension products are packaged in the same type, size and color containers as the “original” product.

In some cases, pediatric patients are at risk for receiving medications that are not appropriate or safe for them (for example, there is a risk for Reye’s Syndrome associated with children receiving aspirin and other salicylate-containing medications).

Without FDA review and specific approval of the OTC product names, companies have capitalized on well-known and trusted brand names and used them for other products, even if the product has different ingredients and uses.

Examples of Over-the-Counter Brand Name Extensions

Family Name	Trademark Extensions	Active Ingredients	Route	Form	Purpose	Manufacturer
ALLEGRA®	Allegra	Fexofenadine	Oral	Tablet	Reduce sneezing, runny nose caused by allergies	Chattem
	Allegra Anti-Itch Cooling Relief Allegra Anti-Itch Intensive Relief	Diphenhydramine Allantoin	Topical	Cream	Topical analgesic, reduce itching	
CLARITIN®	Claritin Eye	Ketotifen fumarate	Intra-ocular	Eye drops	Nasal congestion, sinus pressure	MSD Consumer Care
	Claritin	Loratadine	Oral	Tablet	Allergic conjunctivitis	
TRIAMINIC®	Triaminic	Dextromethorphan Phenylephrine	Oral	Tablet, Capsule or Liquid	Cough suppressant, decongestant	Novartis
	Triaminic Fever Reducer	Acetaminophen	Oral	Syrup	Fever reducer, pain reliever	
KAOPECTATE®	Kaopectate Stool Softener	Docusate calcium	Oral	Softgel	Constipation	Chattem, Inc.
	Kaopectate Anti-Diarrheal Caplets Kaopectate Liquid (various strengths and flavors)	Bismuth subsalicylate	Oral	Caplet, Liquid	Diarrhea	
DULCOLAX®	Dulcolax Laxative	Bisacodyl	Oral, Rectal	Tablet, Suppository	Laxative (used as part of the preparation process for GI procedures)	Boehringer Ingelheim Consumer Products
	Dulcolax Stool Softener	Docusate sodium	Oral	Softgel	Constipation	

Awareness

Despite reports of confusion among various medications within several product lines of OTC medications, the pharmaceutical industry continues to extend the use of existing brand names. In doing so, these companies are posing the following risks:

- Patient Safety Risk: Avoidable adverse drug events arising from misleading naming practices where consumers are purchasing medications with active ingredients that differ from what they expect or what their healthcare practitioners have recommended for their condition(s)
- Trademark Risk: Potential association of a trademark with a misleading naming system

Prevention

Med-ERRS can provide consulting services for this type of issue using EVALUATE-ERRSM. This service offering can help develop appropriate tradenames across family brand names.



ERR on the side of safetySM