

Pharma companies step up campaign against spurious drugs

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Multi-national pharma companies have intensified their efforts to prevent sale of spurious medicines in the market. The companies are fighting against the menace of spurious drugs through laboratory tests, improved packaging and awareness drives among consumers.

For example, Sanofi is collecting and analysing product samples from around the world including India at its specialised laboratory in France. Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India is setting up an anti counterfeiting cell and plans to collaborate with other pharma bodies and government agencies.

"We have a strategy to fight and prevent counterfeiting

and have devised proactive detection plan," said Dominique Woloch, Sanofi's regional security director. The French pharma major has a team of 80 officers globally in anti counterfeiting role.

He likened the counterfeiting menace to organised crime with gangs operating across borders. During last several months Woloch and his team has seized millions of spurious products in raids. Apart from laboratory tests Sanofi is working on product protection strategies, training of medical representatives and awareness campaign against spurious medicines.

Pharma industry in India has been slow to adopt track and trace measures like bar coding on packages but now companies are getting more responsive. "Initially companies have been slow to act against counterfeiting to avoid bad publicity and extra costs. But now the trend is changing. Companies are realising that investing in anti counterfeiting solutions can prevent revenue loss and thus make up for the extra costs," said Ajit Singh, chairperson of ACG Worldwide, a pharma manufacturing and packaging solutions provider.

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