

NAFDAC alerts on fake imported anti malarial drugs

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The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) yesterday alerted over the circulation of fake imported anti-malarial drugs, Maloxine and Amalar, stressing that the last time the genuine Maloxine was imported into the country was in 2003.

Also, courtesy of NAFDAC, in collaboration with a US-based company, state-of-the-art anti-drug counterfeiting testing equipment would soon be available in the country in furtherance of the zero tolerance campaign against fake, expired and substandard drugs in the country.

The Agency has called for the withdrawal of the product in the Nigeria market as it could lead to resistant strains of malaria parasites. Briefing journalists in Lagos, NAFDAC's Director of Enforcement, Mr.Hashim Yusufu, said the brand owner of the product, St. Michael Pharmaceuticals, had declared that it had not imported Maloxine since 2003, adding that any Maloxine in the market after 2003 was fake.

Yusufu who lamented how importers are flooding the Nigerian market with fake anti-malarial drugs, directed all pharmacy outlets stocking Maloxine and other fake anti malaria drugs to withdraw them from the shelf and hand them over to the agency for immediate destruction.

According to him, "NAFDAC is highly concerned about the faking and substandard Maloxine and Amalar tablet which contains sulfadoxine and pyrimethamine, the only drug recommended for use in Intermittent Preventive Treatment (IPT) fro malaria in pregnant mothers. We are equally concerned of the use of monotherapies especially fake mono therapies like Artesunat that could give rise to resistant strains of malaria parasites."

Delivery of the novel drug testing equipment known as "Truscan" is to be preceded by a national survey and audit of all drugs on sale nationwide with the primary objective of building a data bank consisting of identification marks and differences between genuine and counterfeit drugs. NAFDAC Director-General, Dr. Paul Orhii, disclosed this development during a meeting in which the Truscan purchase agreement was drawn with the International Conference on Drug Anti-

Counterfeiting. The event was organised by American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (AEI).

Orhii who recently led a four-man top NAFDAC regulatory officers to Washington D.C. to wrap-up the purchase agreement said the Agency was set to take delivery of two new Truscan devices that would enable a NAFDAC regulatory officer to carry out on-the-spot examination and detection of fake drugs and any other substandard regulated product at the Agency's existing laboratories in Yaba and Oshodi area of Lagos State, Maiduguri, Kaduna, Port Harcourt and Agulu in Anambra State.

Original Link:

<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2009/06/16/nafdac-alerts-on-fake-imported-anti-malarial-drugs/>