



Safe online shopping

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Shopping online can be convenient for you, but also for people selling counterfeit products, including those that can threaten your health and safety. This Legal Health Check offers tips for shopping online.

- Shop at websites with proven track records, especially those with actual stores in Canada or the United States. Avoid unprofessional-looking websites (spelling errors, broken links, and poor quality images are red flags).
- Avoid websites without contact information. Trustworthy retailers will offer a phone number, and often an address.
- Avoid websites advertising brand-name products at heavily discounted prices – if “too good to be true,” it probably is.
- Look for websites with domains like .com or .ca; be careful if they use .ru or .co.
- On EBay and similar websites, check the seller’s history for complaints. Be cautious if the website does not provide a seller’s history.
- Avoid public wifi (especially if you need a username, password or payment information). If you must access public wifi, use a virtual private network (VPN).
- Use a major credit card or paypal for online purchases. If the retailer does not deliver or delivers a counterfeit product, you may be able to get a refund.
- Be wary of sellers asking for direct payment outside of a secure payment system. Avoid those that limit payment options to bank transfers, Western Union, or Moneygram.
- When paying, check the URL. It should begin with https:// and not http://. Without an “s” your connection is not secure and your information may be stolen. Do not complete the transaction! Look for a locked padlock icon at the bottom of your browser or by the URL in the address bar.
- Never provide your credit card over email or text.
- Keep your social insurance number and birthdate private.

If you purchase a counterfeit product, contact:

- Your credit card company or paypal to immediately request a refund
- The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501

For links and resources, visit cba.org/healthcheck



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Contact or referral info here.