

Ban on 16 drugs over 'potential risks'

New Delhi: The Centre has prohibited the manufacture, sale and distribution of 16 fixed-dose combination (FDC) drugs, saying they lack "therapeutic justification" and their continued use was not considered beneficial in relation to the potential risks involved.

The Union health ministry said the move was aimed at safeguarding public health and promoting the rational use of medicines, while ensuring that only effective and scientifically validated medicines are available to the public.

FDC drugs are those which contain a combination of two or more active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) in a fixed ratio. The decision follows a review of FDCs undertaken in compliance with the Supreme Court's directions. The Drugs Technical Advisory Board had constituted an expert committee to examine various drug combinations and identify those that were irrational, therapeutically unjustified or potentially harmful.

"The manufacture for sale, distribution and supply of the identified 16 FDCs for human use shall stand prohibited with immediate effect across the country," the health ministry said. It added that these drugs were found to "lack therapeutic justification" and were "not considered beneficial" with respect to the risks involved.

It said the prohibited formulations included dermatological preparations, analgesic (painkillers) and antispasmodic (muscle relaxants) medicines, and antibiotic-based combinations.

Combinations such as Acetyl Salicylic Acid with Ethoheptazine; Dicyclomine, Paracetamol and Clidinium Bromide; Dicyclomine, Paracetamol, Clidinium Bromide and Chlordiazepoxide; Glizide with Chromium Picolinate; and Paracetamol with Lignocaine have also been banned.