

# What does the prescription status of a medicine mean?



You are here:

[EDQM FAQs](#) / [EDQM FAQs in English](#) / [HEALTHCARE](#) / [Melclass Database on the legal classification of medicines as regards their supply](#) / What does the prescription status of a medicine mean?

## Answer:

The prescription status of a medicine (i.e. the classification of a medicine as regards its supply) determines whether or not you need a medical prescription to obtain that medicine. Medicines that require a medical prescription to be dispensed are called 'prescription-only medicines' (POM). Medicines that can be obtained without a prescription are often called 'over-the-counter' (OTC) medicines (labelled 'Not subject to prescription' in the Melclass Database). The legal classification of a medicine as regards its supply is decided by the regulatory authorities of member states.