

NPPA refuses to exempt Crocin Advance from price control

Press Bureau
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GSK Consumer Healthcare's popular painkiller and fever medicine Crocin Advance has run into trouble with the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), which refused to exempt the drug from price control.

The drug price controller has asked GSK to reduce the market price of Crocin Advance to the NPPA-approved ceiling price. The regulator will also fix an overcharging fine on GSK Consumer Healthcare for selling the painkiller at prices higher than those fixed by NPPA.

While the price fixed for paracetamol (the key ingredient in Crocin Advance) under the Drug Price Control Order (DPCO 2013) is 94 paise for a tablet or ₹9.40 for a 10-tablet strip, GSK sells Crocin Advance at ₹20 for a 10-tablet strip.

While GSK claims Crocin Advance is a locally-researched new drug which assures faster relief compared to ordinary paracetamol and hence outside the ambit of price control, an NPPA official said that according to their understanding, it is no different from any other paracetamol for which prices have been fixed. "The company had sought exemption from price control on the ground that it is a new drug, however, we do not agree to that argument and have stated that GSK needs to follow the existing ceiling price as fixed by NPPA for paracetamols," the official added.

"Crocin Advance (Paracetamol Fast Release tablet), an innovation product with a superior pharmacokinetic profile to standard paracetamol tablets, has been approved as new drug formulation by CDSCO. GlaxoSmithKline Asia



Pvt (GSKAP), the marketer of Crocin Advance tablets, has applied to NPPA through Remedix Pharmaceuticals, the manufacturers of the said drug, for grant of exemption to Crocin Advance from price control under the provisions of Para 32 in DPCO 2013. GSKAP is awaiting NPPA's response in this regard," the company spokesperson said.

Meanwhile, the Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration has put a 'stop sale' order on Crocin Advance, Crocin Suspension, Crocin Drops and Calpol syrup on charges of overpricing. Officials said any 'stop sale' will not lead to any shortage of paracetamol in the market, as several other brands are available at lower prices.

As per the new DPCO, the price of a bottle of 60ml paracetamol is fixed at ₹19.20 but Crocin Suspension is sold at ₹37.77. While a 15ml bottle should cost ₹4.80, Crocin Drops is priced at ₹29. Moreover, Calpol 60 ml has been priced at ₹32.75 per bottle by GSK while under DPCO 2013, the ceiling price is fixed at ₹20.79.

The Maharashtra FDA will approach the NPPA to seek overcharging fine from GSK Consumer Healthcare for selling these medicines above the ceiling price.

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