



ASK YOUR PHARMACIST THIS

How can I identify my medication?

Medication Class Overview

Medications can often be identified by physical characteristics such as their imprint, color, shape, size, and dosage form. Knowing these features can help you recognize your medication, notice changes in its appearance, and communicate with your pharmacist if you have questions.

- **Medication Identification:** The process of using a medication's physical characteristics and product information to help determine what medication it is.

Why Is This Question Important?

- ✓ Helps you recognize your medication and confirm you have the expected product.
- ✓ Helps distinguish between medications that may have similar appearances.
- ✓ Helps you recognize when your medication looks different from a previous refill.
- ✓ Provides useful identifying information if a tablet or capsule becomes separated from its original container.
- ✓ Helps you know what information to provide your pharmacist if you have questions about the appearance of your medication.

What You May Learn

For tablets and capsules, your pharmacist may use several physical characteristics to help identify your medication:

- **Imprint** — letters, numbers, or symbols printed, engraved, or stamped on the medication
- **Color** — the color or combination of colors

- **Shape** — such as round, oval, oblong, or capsule-shaped
- **Size** — the approximate dimensions of the medication
- **Dosage form** — such as a tablet, capsule, or softgel
- **Scoring** — lines or markings that may appear on certain tablets
- **Manufacturer** — different manufacturers may produce the same medication with different appearances

Example

Medication: Lisinopril 10 mg tablet

Appearance: The imprint, color, shape, and size may vary depending on the manufacturer.

Identification: Your pharmacist can use the medication's imprint and other physical characteristics, along with product information, to verify the medication.

Key Takeaway

Knowing what your medication looks like can help you recognize it and notice when something changes. If your medication suddenly looks different, **don't rely on appearance alone—ask your pharmacist to verify it before taking it.**