

# QR code for drugs

June 20, 2022

**In news-** Government of India has recently introduced quick response (QR) codes to ensure authenticity and traceability of 300 common drug brands, including analgesics, vitamins, diabetic, and hypertension medicines, among others.

## Key updates-

- **The Union Ministry of Health has made amendments to the Drugs Rules, 1945, to implement this.**
- In this regard, the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) had identified the list of 300 drugs.
- **The plan will be implemented in phases from May 2023.**
- In the first phase, top brands which hold market shares of at least 35% each for lifesaving drugs will be required to display the QR code.
- **This is aimed at preventing the sale of spurious drugs.**
- **Popular brands, such as Dolo, Allegra, Asthalin, Augmentin, Saridon, Limcee, Calpol, Corex, Thyronorm, Unwanted 72, were identified.**
- **These high-selling brands have been shortlisted based on their moving annual turnover (MAT) value.**
- As per the draft notification of the ministry **the manufacturers of the formulation products will print or affix bar code or QR code on its primary packaging label** and on the secondary package label that store data or information legible with software application to facilitate authentication.
- **The stored data or information will include unique product identification code, proper and generic name of the drug, brand name, name and address of the manufacturer, batch number, date of manufacturing, date of expiry, and manufacturing licence number.**
- **Earlier this year, the Centre had said active**

**pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) or bulk drugs that are manufactured or imported in India should bear a QR code on its label at each level,** packaging that stores data or information readable with software application to facilitate tracking.

- The new rule will be applicable from January 1, 2023.

**Note:** According to an earlier estimate by the World Health Organization (WHO), around 35 percent of the fake drugs sold globally come from India

### **What is QR code?**

- A QR code is a type of matrix barcode invented in 1994 by the Japanese automotive company Denso Wave.
- A QR code (quick response code) is used to provide easy access to online information through the digital camera on a smartphone or tablet.
- A QR code works similarly to barcodes at the supermarket.
- Each QR code consists black squares and dots which represent different pieces of information.
- When scanned, the unique pattern on the barcode translates into human-readable data.