



Barcode Dos and Don'ts

Multiple Barcodes



The nurse doesn't know which barcode to scan, resulting in frustration, non-compliance, and possible errors.

Single Barcode



A single GS1 DataMatrix barcode eliminates the guesswork and ensures that the product matches the correct entry in the database.

Removed Overwrap



To add a barcode to the unit of use, pharmacy staff must remove the overwrap. This causes wastage due to a shortened product stability and shelf life.

Overwrap Intact



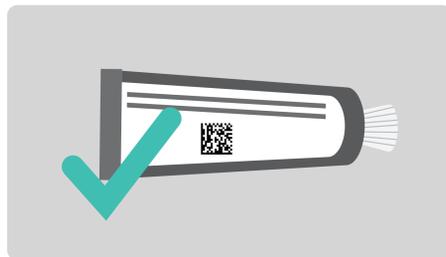
The supplier includes a GS1 DataMatrix, encoded with GTIN, lot and expiry date, on the unit of use. This limits the need to relabel the product.

No Barcode



When there is no barcode on the product, it has to be added manually.

Properly Barcoded



The inclusion of a GS1 DataMatrix barcode, containing GTIN, Lot and Expiry, on the unit of use means resources are not wasted applying a barcode manually.

Poor Background



Cannot scan barcode due to poor background, such as a translucent bottle or highly reflective packing.

Preferred Background



Use a non-reflective background, consistent with [GS1 General Specifications](#), to improve the success of barcode scanning.

Poor Orientation



When placed on the curvature of the vial or bottle; the scanner has difficulty reading barcode.

Correct Orientation



Barcodes should be placed longitudinally along a flat surface; however, switching to a GS1 DataMatrix is preferred.

Poor Location



Barcodes must be always visible. Poor placement, such as on a cannister inside the inhaler casing, requires pharmacy staff to add a visible barcode.

Proper Location

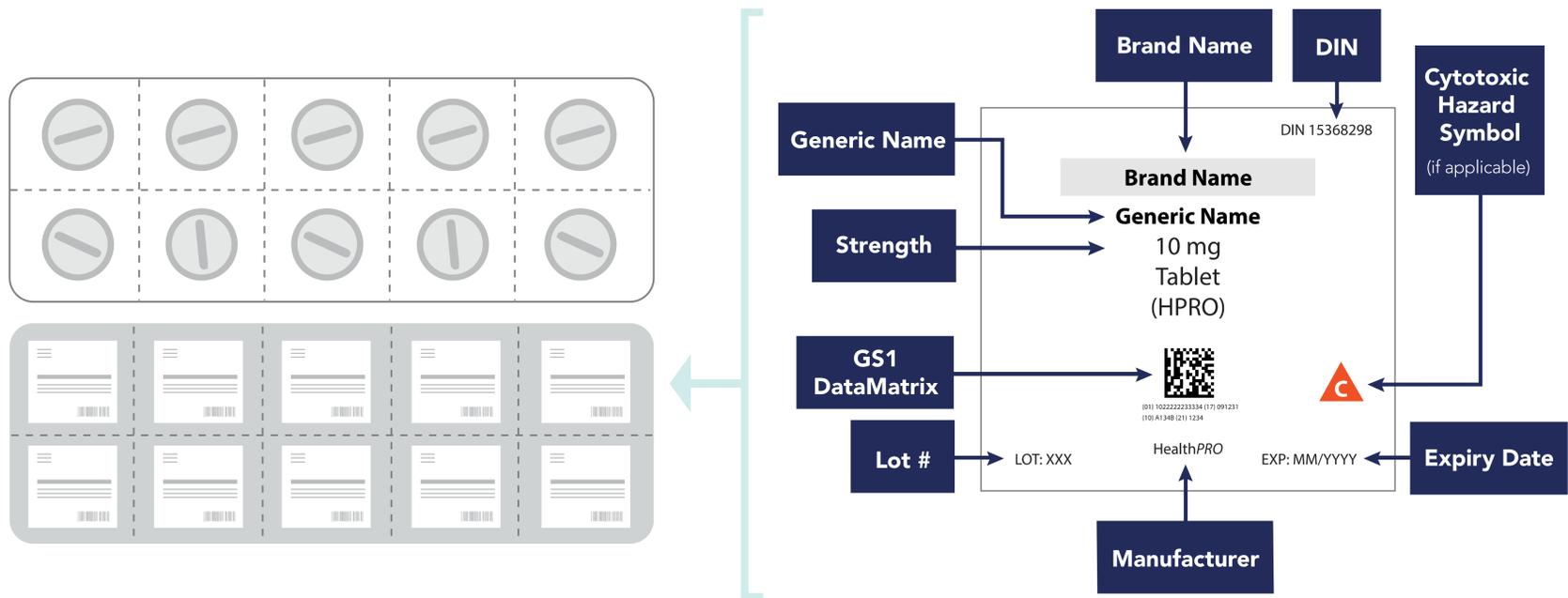


GS1 DataMatrix should be placed where it can be easily scanned when product is fully assembled.



Barcode on Unit-of-Use

What it takes to be "Unit Dose"



GS1 Compliant Barcodes for Healthcare

Although some GS1 linear barcodes are acceptable and can include variable data such as lot number and expiry date, their size becomes a limiting factor. The recommended barcode symbology for healthcare is the GS1 DataMatrix. These barcodes can be encoded with the GTIN (Global Trade Item Number) and should also be encoded with the lot number, and expiry date. Serial number is optional.

GS1 Compliant Barcodes have Application Identifiers (AI) that separate the information. Each Application Identifier is a standard two, three, or four-digit numeric code that is used to define the meaning and format of the encoded data. The AIs required for Pharmacy implementation are:

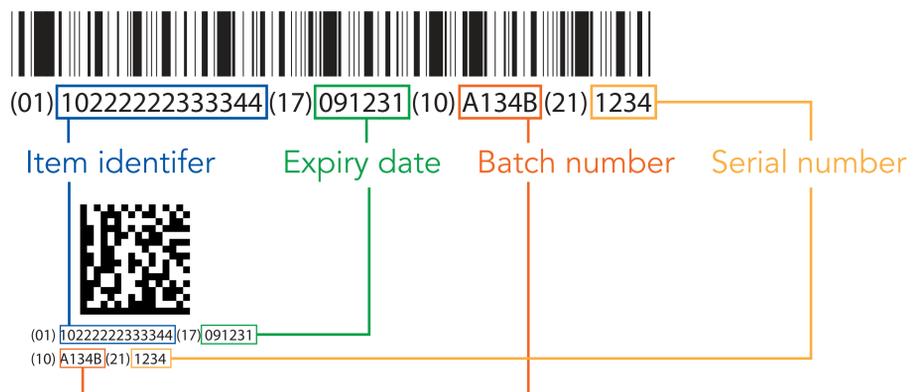
- (01) GTIN (Global Trade Item Number)
- (17) Expiry Date (YYMMDD)
- (10) Batch or Lot Number
- (21) Serial Number

In the human readable GTIN, application identifiers are in the parentheses. Parentheses are not encoded in the machine-readable data carrier.

GS1-128



GS1 DataMatrix



For more information on GS1 DataMatrix and barcode requirements and best practices, visit:

[Barcodes for Designers, Printers and Packagers](#)
[Barcode Scanning Equipment Selection Criteria](#)

[Implementation Guideline for Data Matrix](#)
[GS1 General Specification, Section 5.6](#)