

## Heartburn medicine Zantac recalled from New Zealand hospitals and pharmacies

Katarina Williams and Mandy Te · 18:09, Oct 10, 2019

Heartburn medicine Zantac is being recalled from pharmacies and hospitals in New Zealand. This follows a global recall of Zantac products as concerns have been raised over impurities in the medicine. It is also known as ranitidine.

On Thursday, Medsafe compliance manager Derek Fitzgerald said over-the-counter versions of Zantac had been recalled from pharmacies.

A prescription Zantac injection had also been recalled. The recall also applied to online pharmacies operated from New Zealand.

Fitzgerald said Medsafe, the country's medicinal regulator, was aware that in some countries, products with ranitidine had been recalled or their supply had been put on hold. Medsafe was in the process of confirming the situation with four companies that were involved in supplying ranitidine products, he said.

"The risk posed by NDMA contamination is very low and advice on the Medsafe website still applies." NDMA is a potential carcinogen commonly found in some foods, water and air.

To date, the level of NDMA impurity in ranitidine if taken over decades may modestly increase the risk of developing cancer, Fitzgerald said. "It is not possible to provide an accurate estimate of the magnitude of carcinogenic risk associated with NDMA impurity based on currently available safety data."

People who were taking ranitidine could keep taking it for short-term use as there was no known immediate health risk associated with the medicine. However, if there were concerns, Medsafe encouraged people to talk to their pharmacist or doctor.