

Helping to fight the battle against infection

It becomes more difficult each day to fight the war against infection. As bacteria become more resistant to antibiotics and the rise in conditions such as diabetes make us more susceptible to infections, we are all at risk, but patients and individuals requiring nursing care can be particularly vulnerable.

The infection control team within your healthcare setting create policies and procedures for cleaning, sterilising and changing of equipment and consumables used in patient care. You and the team caring for the patient will implement the policies and procedures.

Many products will come with a recommended time for changing, others with a shelf life, and some with instructions to discard after a certain time following opening, dilution, activation or reconstitution. These dates are given by the manufacturer following extensive testing of their products.

How can you monitor this when the product is stock on the shelf or in use? If not monitored correctly this may lead to:

- Increased risk of infection from expiry/change times not being correctly observed
- Increased waste and costs from users being unsure of the correct date and taking the safety first option of "if in doubt, throw it out"

- Stock control implications
- Patient discomfort from too frequent change of disposables or risk of infection and/or discomfort if not changed appropriately
- Health and safety risk from:
 - infection
 - toxicity of drugs, chemicals or cleaning solutions that are past their expiry or use by date
 - ineffective treatments, drugs, chemicals or cleaning solutions that are past their expiry or use by date

Generally the dates are initially displayed on the packaging at point of manufacture, processing or sterilisation. Once in use, the date of first use or last change will be recorded by hand on a label applied to the product/container or on a chart. These methods can be problematic as labels and charts get torn, ink can smudge and handwriting can sometimes be illegible.





Find out how UWI can help you

- ✓ reduce risk
- ✓ reduce cost
- ✓ improve stock control

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Real-time solution

Working alongside your current processes the UWI Label offers an innovative and accurate approach to monitoring the time that a product is safe to use or a test meets the required criteria. Simply applied at the time of packaging or use, the label clearly gives a universally recognised indicator of the time of expiry for the product.

User-friendly concept

The UWI Label incorporates an embedded, elapsed-time indicator strip which is automatically activated when the product is opened; progressively changing from green to red according to a pre-set time period. Red alerts the user or carer that the product may no longer be safe.

Alternatively the label can be activated when it is peeled from a sheet and applied to a product as it is reconstituted, diluted, decanted from a bulk storage container or mixed.

Unique technology

Designed using microfluidic technology, the patented smart label comprises three parts; the fluid, the microfluidic channel and the flexible material substrate. Many years of rigorous scientific and technical development is behind its successful performance.

Tailored timescale

Timeframes are pre-set at the point of manufacture using microfluidic technology. This can be from minutes to hours, days, weeks and months. The label can also be set to longer periods, subject to further UWI Technology research and development and validation.

Broad application

Made from flexible, paper-like, composite materials, the UWI Label is suitable for application on a wide variety and size of jars, bottles, packs, devices, surfaces, containers and tubes. It is consistently reliable across refrigerated and ambient products.

Versatile design

The size of the UWI label can be adjusted according to its intended use and artwork developed to align with product or facility branding.



Founded in 2009 by CEO and inventor of the UWI Label, Pete Higgins, UWI Technology has since won a raft of awards in recognition of its technical and commercial developments from organisations including: PWC Scotland, Barclays, NESTA, SMART Scotland and Scottish Enterprise.

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Benefits

Working alongside current processes the UWI Label reduces risk by giving a clear indication of when a product is still safe to use or should be discarded which means:

- Reduced risk of infection
- Reduced risk of ineffective treatment caused by diminished efficacy of drugs and drug toxicity
- Reduced waste as there will be less likelihood of doubt about using a product or discarding it
- Reduced costs because of the reduction in waste, repeat treatment and a reduction in length of patient stay due to ineffective treatment or additional treatment because of acquired infection
- Improved stock control
- Support for the risk management strategy for infection control
- Improved patient/client comfort