

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Packaging... what for?

The essential role of packaging for more health, hygiene and safety for products and people

First episode of an educational series meant to demonstrate the importance of packaging for its content. This document, released by the French Packaging Council, reminds the reader of the many advantages that packaging brings to people and the environment.

50%

it is the rate of counterfeited or forged medicine bought on the Internet every year⁽¹⁾

250 millions

inhalers for people suffering from asthma are sold in Europe each year⁽²⁾

40%

of the French population buy, due to COVID-19, more packaged products⁽³⁾

(1) WHO

(2) Comité Français des Aérosols

(3) IFOP May 2020 [French people and packaging](#)

%

FIGURES



Societal dynamics drive things forward. The many stakeholders (NGOs, citizen initiatives, public authorities, media, etc.) play their role in **establishing low-impact packaging**.

In the end, it is up to the packaged product's value chain to:

- ▶ Think primary packaging as part of a whole (entire packaging system)
- ▶ Highlight the **essentials features of packaging** for health, hygiene and safety
- ▶ Inform about the **essential aspect of packaging** for the health of people



RECOMMENDATIONS

Packaging is essential for:

- ▶ **The health of people:** packaging provides reassurance and allows people to trust the product (food, drugs, etc.), because it limits both the risk of counterfeiting, and health risks (especially during a pandemic)
- ▶ **The safety of people:** packaging is essential notably in the work environment (i.e. for logistics employees), but also for consumers handling dangerous household products (thanks to safety caps)
- ▶ **The microbiological safety of products:** packaging takes part in hygienic or even aseptic conditioning processes of products (food, etc.) or in sterilization processes (cans, medical devices, etc.). Packaging thus allows the preservation of products.



STAKES

European regulations:

- ▶ [European Legislative Package on Circular Economy](#)
- ▶ [European Directive on Food Contact 1935/2004](#)
- ▶ [European Regulation Hygiene Package 178/2002](#)
- ▶ [European Regulation MAA for Medicinal Products 726/2004](#)

French regulations:

- ▶ [AGEC Law](#) (french only)
- ▶ [3rd paragraph of Article L. 120-1 of the Consumer Code, regarding the ban on the sale of some bulk products](#) (french only)



REFERENCES

Health, safety, hygiene: packaging is essential



Packaging contributes to the health of people:

- ▶ There are a lot of product-packaging combinations in which packaging plays a central role for health: it is the case of Galenic formulation, dosage and use of the product, especially pharmaceutical products.
- ▶ Packaging guarantees the quality of drugs, the sterility of certain medical devices (dressings, surgical drapes, etc.).
- ▶ Packaging is an essential guarantee of the intrinsic quality of the product (fight against forgery, fraud, etc.). It provides product integrity and compliance with various regulatory requirements (drugs, food, etc.).



Packaging is at the heart of safety:

Whether it is linked to product-packaging combinations for professional (B to B) or usage (B to C) reasons, packaging must meet several safety challenges.

▶ For people:

- When it comes to handling hazardous product safely (plant protection products in agriculture)
- During the logistical handling of packaged products: packaging contributes to the stability of pallet loads.

▶ For consumers:

- At the time of consumption: packaging is essential because it prevents product deterioration. It guarantees food safety. Packaging fights against product counterfeiting.
- At the time of use: packaging protects final users against potential risks linked to dangerous products (at the time of opening and use: safety caps, bicomponent cannula).



Packaging is necessary for the hygienic preservation of products:

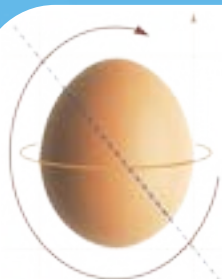
The packaging world's high technology and its constant innovations contribute to the optimal preservation of products during their shelf life. It is especially the case of food, cosmetic, medical or pharmaceutical products.

- ▶ **Before use:** during the conditioning operations, these products are packaged under clean or even aseptic conditions (free of any external contamination): the packaging guarantees the consumer this whole hygiene process.
- ▶ **At the time of use:** for products that can have a long duration of use, associated packaging guarantees the absence of contamination or deterioration caused by air, humidity or pathogens.



Find this complete report on the French Packaging Council website:

<https://conseil-emballage.org/en/why-are-products-packaged-packaging-is-essential-for-health-safety-and-hygiene/>



The mission of the French Packaging Council, which gathers since 1997 all the actors of the packaging chain, is about elaborating and spreading good practices regarding design, use and commercialization of product packaging.

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