

FAQs

How do I know if my personally identifying information has been exposed by this scheme?

The University of California (the “UC” or the “University”) Riverside has provided two notifications – one to all enrolled students and a second to students we know have been affected by the scheme. If the letter you received did not notify you that you have received prescription medication or been solicited for your UC SHIP membership information or other medical information, UC does not currently have information suggesting that your information was obtained or used in the scheme.

I participated in this clinical trial and now fear that I have suffered harm.

The prescription medications involved in this scheme include Dermacin, Inflammacin, Diclofex, Mebolic, Migranow, Inflammation Reduction Pak, Xelital, and possibly others. UC encourages you to contact your student health center (see <http://www.ucop.edu/uc-health/reports-resources/student-health-services/index.html> for contact information) if you have any concerns about your health, if you received any of the medications above, if you participated in a “clinical trial” for a pain cream, or if you have received medication from a provider not known to you for any other reason.

This “clinical trial” had no affiliation with the University and was not approved or organized by the University.

UC researchers do conduct scores of legitimate clinical trials that allow patients access to new and innovative treatments, and lead to substantial breakthroughs for patient care. UC strongly encourages students and third parties to verify a researcher’s credentials and affiliation before participating in any clinical trial. Make sure that the informed consent form you sign lists an Institutional Review Board, or Ethics Committee, and contact them to make sure the study is legitimate. Information about clinical trials can also be found at www.clinicaltrials.gov. Students should beware of anyone offering “free” samples or easy cash in exchange for their personal information and of so-called “clinical trials” that offer large amounts of money just for signing up.

Are the medications that were prescribed dangerous?

UC encourages all students to contact their student health centers if they have received any of the medications above, if they participated in a “clinical trial” for a pain cream, or if they have received medication from a provider not known to them for any other reason.

The prescription medications involved include Dermacin, Inflammacin, Diclofex, Mebolic, Migranow, Inflammation Reduction Pak, Xelital, and possibly others. Most of these medications are packaged in kits consisting of a drug similar to ibuprofen (either as a topical solution or as pills), coupled with a second component, which is similar to an over-the-counter “Ben-Gay” cream. Mebolic is a prescription vitamin product, and Migranow is a kit composed of a generic migraine medication plus a topical cooling liquid similar to over-the-counter “Vic’s VapoRub.”

With a few exceptions, there were no claims submitted by any of the involved prescribers for clinical care of the students for whom they wrote these prescriptions – even though the drugs at issue here should not be prescribed without a good faith medical examination and diagnoses of

some condition to be treated. The above medications may also be contraindicated with pregnancy, use of alcohol, and/or serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). This is why we're encouraging students to reach out to their medical providers if they have specific questions about the side effects of a medication they may have taken.

When and how did UC learn about this scheme?

UC SHIP regularly reviews prescription claim data for unusual activity. On Thursday, April 20, UC publicly filed court documents setting forth the information known to UC at the time. We cannot provide additional details about this investigation right now because it is ongoing.

Have the perpetrators been apprehended?

UC is actively working with law enforcement and will request that the perpetrators of this scheme be prosecuted. We cannot share information about any criminal investigation.

We are also reaching out to the medical and professional licensing authorities to ensure that they can take appropriate action to suspend or revoke licenses of any professionals abusing their positions.

What of my personal information might be exposed?

The perpetrators of this scheme are believed to have solicited student information through a sham clinical trial advertised on Facebook through a company known as California Clinical Trials, LLC, through job fairs attended by companies known as Pharma Pro and Pharma Pro Solutions, and by setting up tables on campus during student events. Personal information that a student provided to one of those companies or individuals related to those companies may be at risk.

What is UC doing to protect its students?

UC is taking every reasonable step to protect our students and the UC SHIP plan from this kind of abuse. The UC SHIP health plan offers identity protection services made available by Anthem through ALL Clear ID. We are actively pursuing legal action and working with law enforcement to hold the perpetrators accountable.

Will the University reimburse me if these scammers stole my identity and opened financial accounts?

The UC SHIP plan offers identity theft protection services made available by Anthem through ALL Clear ID. There is also fraud protection offered by financial institutions for fraudulent transactions. Generally, the University is not liable for identity theft losses occurring as a result of a student providing personal information to a third party.

Will I be financially liable for these prescriptions (e.g., co-pays, lifetime cap, annual limits, etc.)?

No, we view what has happened to this point to be a fraud on UC SHIP and our students.

I have information that may assist law enforcement or the University in this matter.

Please contact the UC Police Department.

I have additional questions not covered here

If you are a student, please call 951-827-5683 to speak to someone at Student Health Services Insurance during usual business hours.

If you are a journalist, please contact James Grant, AVC of Strategic Communications 951-827-6047.

I am concerned because my [child/son/daughter/neighbor/friend/roommate/cousin] received this letter, and I want some information.

Under the law, we cannot share personal information about UC SHIP members except with the students themselves, or with their written authorization. We also do not give away personal information by phone.