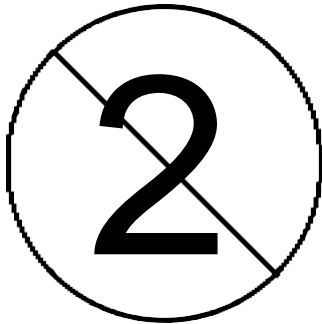


# Single-use medical devices

## How do I know if a device is for single-use?

It will have this symbol on the packaging or the device:



## What does single-use mean?

**Do not reuse.** A single-use device is used on an individual patient during a single procedure and then discarded. It is not intended to be reprocessed and used again, even on the same patient.

## Is single-patient use the same as single-use?

**No.** Single-patient use means the medical device may be used for more than one episode of use on **one patient only**; the device may undergo some form of **reprocessing** between each use.

## Why shouldn't they be reused?

The MHRA is aware of serious incidents relating to reuse of single-use devices.

Reuse can be unsafe because of risk of:

- **cross-infection** — inability to clean and decontaminate due to design.
- **endotoxin reaction** — excessive bacterial breakdown products, which cannot be adequately removed by cleaning.
- **patient injury** — device failure from reprocessing or reuse because of fatigue, material alteration and embrittlement.
- **chemical burns or sensitisation** — residues from chemical decontamination agents on materials that can absorb/adsorb chemicals.

Also, if you reuse a single-use device you may be legally **liable** for the safe performance of the device.

## Can I sterilize a single-use device?

*Some single-use devices are marketed as non-sterile. These may require reprocessing, in line with the manufacturer's instructions, to make them sterile and ready for use. Check the manufacturer's instructions for any limit on the number of times the unused device may be reprocessed. Once used on a patient, the device must be discarded.*