

Facilitator notes for playing the WhatThePharma? card game

Set-up 30 minutes

- Use any deck of WhatThePharma? cards
- Spread out all the cards (except wildcards and rules) face up on a table
- Explain that the object of the game is to make and explain a set containing a **drug** (green), **mechanism of action** (yellow), **clinical indication** (blue), and **side effect/patient note** (pink)
- Give this example: **ramipril** (drug) is an **ACE inhibitor** (mechanism of action) indicated for **hypertension** (clinical indication); the patient may experience a **dry cough** (side effect) which may cause discontinuation of the drug
- Ask the players to make up sets of four matching cards – how long this takes depends on what your students know about drugs, don't rush!
- When needed, display the crib sheet of example sets for students to refer to: <https://whatthepharmagame.com/matches.html>
- Make it clear that these are examples of sets – the decks were designed to allow overlap between the cards, particularly with indications and side effects.
- When the players have made the sets then they can play the game (see the rules cards) – or reflect on what they have learned and play another day

Playing the game 30 minutes

- People can play in pairs to begin with if that is easier. When they are more confident, they can play solo
- There are three phases to each player's turn:
 - pick up a card (unseen from draw deck or seen from the discard pile)
 - play a set of 2, 3, or 4 cards OR play 1 card on an existing set and **EXPLAIN THE SET**
 - discard a card
- The winner is the player who plays all their cards
- Emphasise that the players are their own judges and must be convinced that a set is valid e.g. check in the BNF
- Let students play and discover on their own, but it is also a good idea to check in every now and then and listen to their explanations of the sets.
- Encourage detailed verbal explanation with interesting anecdotes – this makes pharmacology more social and easier to remember
- Consider an incentive, for example a sweet (a miniature chocolate bunny at £0.75 is the current favourite) on the table as a prize for the winner of each round
- At the end of the session, ask each student to tell the rest of the room **ONE** useful fact about a drug they learned that they would take away and remember