

Algunas Inc., dba Woodland Hills Compounding Pharmacy 7/17/17



Division of Pharmaceutical
Quality Operations IV
19701 Fairchild Road
Los Angeles, California 92612
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WARNING LETTER

**VIA UNITED PARCEL SERVICE
SIGNATURE REQUIRED**

July 17, 2017
CMS 532739

WL#:

Dr. Steven A. Levin, President
Algunas, Inc. DBA Woodland Hills Compounding Pharmacy
20631 Ventura Blvd, Suite 305
Woodland Hills, CA 91364-2382

Dear Dr. Levin:

From April 25, 2016, to April 29, 2016, a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) investigator inspected your facility, Algunas, Inc., dba Woodland Hills Compounding Pharmacy, located at 20631 Ventura Blvd, Suite 305 Woodland Hills, CA 91364-2382. During the inspection, the investigator noted that drug products you produced failed to meet the conditions of section 503A of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FDCA) [21 U.S.C. § 353a] for exemption from certain provisions of the FDCA. Specifically, the investigator noted serious deficiencies in your practices for producing non-sterile drug products, which put patients at risk.

FDA issued a Form FDA 483 to your firm on April 29, 2016. FDA acknowledges receipt of your facility's response dated May 11, 2016. Based on this inspection, it appears that you produced drug products that violate the FDCA.

A. Compounded Drug Products Under the FDCA

Section 503A of the FDCA describes the conditions under which human drug products compounded by a licensed pharmacist in a State licensed pharmacy or a Federal facility, or a licensed physician, qualify for exemptions from three sections of the FDCA: compliance with current good manufacturing practices (CGMP) (section 501(a)(2)(B)); labeling with adequate directions for use (section 502(f)(1)); and FDA approval prior to marketing (section 505) [21 U.S.C. §§ 351(a)(2)(B), 352(f)(1) and 355(a)].^[1] Receipt of valid prescriptions for individually-identified patients is one of the conditions for the exemptions under section 503A.

B. Failure to Meet the Conditions of Section 503A

During the inspection, the FDA investigator noted that drug products produced by your firm failed to meet the conditions of section 503A. For example, the investigator noted your firm did not receive valid prescriptions for individually-identified patients for a portion of the drug products you produced.

Therefore, you compounded drug products (collectively the “ineligible drug products”) that do not meet the conditions of section 503A and are not eligible for the exemptions in that section from the FDA approval requirement of section 505 of the FDCA, the requirement under section 502(f)(1) of the FDCA that labeling bear adequate directions for use, and the requirement of compliance with CGMP under section 501(a)(2)(B) of the FDCA.

Specific violations are described below.

C. Violations of the FDCA

Adulterated Drug Products

The FDA investigator noted that drug products were prepared, packed, or held under insanitary conditions, whereby they may have become contaminated with filth or rendered injurious to health, causing your drug products to be adulterated under section 501(a)(2)(A) of the FDCA. For example, the investigator observed that your firm produced **(b)(4)** drug products without adequate cleaning of work surfaces, equipment, and utensils to prevent cross-contamination.

Furthermore, the manufacture of the ineligible drug products is subject to FDA’s CGMP regulations, Title 21, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), parts 210 and 211. The FDA investigator observed significant CGMP violations at your facility, causing the ineligible drug products to be adulterated within the meaning of section 501(a)(2)(B) of the FDCA. The violations included, for example:

1. Your firm failed to thoroughly investigate any unexplained discrepancy or failure of a batch or any of its components to meet any of its specifications, whether or not the batch has already been distributed (21 CFR 211.192).
2. Your firm failed to have separate or defined areas or such other control systems necessary to prevent contamination or mix-ups (21 CFR 211.42(c)).

Under section 301(a) of the FDCA [21 U.S.C. § 331(a)], the introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of any drug that is adulterated is a prohibited act. Further, it is a prohibited act under section 301(k) of the FDCA [21

U.S.C. § 331(k)] to do any act with respect to a drug, if such act is done while the drug is held for sale after shipment in interstate commerce and results in the drug being adulterated.

Unapproved New Drug Products

You do not have any FDA-approved applications on file for the ineligible drug products that you compounded.^[2] Under sections 505(a) and 301(d) of the FDCA [21 U.S.C. § 331(d)], a new drug may not be introduced into or delivered for introduction into interstate commerce unless an application approved by FDA under section 505 of the FDCA is in effect for the drug. Marketing of these products, or other applicable products, without an approved application violates these provisions of the FDCA.

Misbranded Drug Products

The ineligible drug products you compounded are intended for conditions not amenable to self-diagnosis and treatment by individuals who are not medical practitioners; therefore, adequate directions for use cannot be written so that a layman can use these products safely for their intended uses. Consequently, their labeling fails to bear adequate directions for their intended uses, and they are not exempt from the requirements of section 502(f)(1) of the FDCA (*see, e.g.*, 21 CFR 201.115). Accordingly, these ineligible drug products are misbranded under section 502(f)(1) of the FDCA. The introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of these products therefore violates section 301(a) of the FDCA. It is also a prohibited act under section 301(k) of the FDCA to do any act with respect to a drug, if such act is done while the drug is held for sale after shipment in interstate commerce and results in the drug being misbranded.

D. Corrective Actions

We acknowledge that during our inspection of your facility, you agreed to immediately discontinue production and to no longer produce **(b)(4)** products at your firm.

Please be aware that section 501(a)(2)(A) of the FDCA concerning insanitary conditions applies regardless of whether drug products you compound meet the conditions of section 503A, including the condition on receipt of a prescription for an identified individual patient prior to compounding and distributing drug products.

As explained above, receipt of valid prescriptions for individually-identified patients is a condition of section 503A, which your firm failed to meet for a portion of the drug products you produced. Should you continue to compound and distribute drug products that do not meet the conditions of section 503A, the compounding and distribution of such drugs would be subject to the new drug approval requirement, the requirement to label drug products with adequate directions for use, and the drug CGMP regulations. Before doing so, you must comply with the requirements of section 505 and 502(f)(1) and fully implement corrections that meet the minimum requirements of the CGMP regulations.

Regarding your firm's CGMP violations, your proposed corrections to improve your investigations into out-of-specification results were not adequate. For example, your investigation procedure does not provide sufficient instructions on how to conduct proper investigations into deviations from established specifications for all aspects of your operations. Moreover, your complaint handling procedure does not specify where completed investigations will be maintained and whether the information recorded will be properly reviewed for accuracy. Lastly, although you committed to ensuring that your outside laboratory used validated test methods to perform potency testing, you did not provide a date by which the use of validated test methods would begin.

E. Conclusion

The violations cited in this letter are not intended to be an all-inclusive statement of violations at your facility. You are responsible for investigating and determining the causes of the violations identified above and for preventing their recurrence or the occurrence of other violations. It is your responsibility to ensure that your firm complies with all requirements of federal law, including FDA regulations.

You should take prompt action to correct the violations cited in this letter. Failure to promptly correct these violations may result in legal action without further notice, including, without limitation, seizure and injunction.

Within fifteen working days of receipt of this letter, please notify this office in writing of the specific steps that you have taken to correct violations. Please include an explanation of each step being taken to prevent the recurrence of violations, as well as copies of related documentation. If you do not believe that the products discussed above are in violation of the FDCA, include your reasoning and any supporting information for our consideration. If you cannot complete corrective action within 15 working days, state the reason for the delay and the time within which you will complete the correction.

Your firm's response should be sent to:

CDR Steven E. Porter, Jr.
Director, Division of Pharmaceutical Quality Operations IV
United States Food and Drug Administration
19701 Fairchild
Irvine, California 92612

If you have any questions regarding any issues in this letter, please contact Ms. Mariza Jafary, Compliance Officer via email at Mariza.Jafary@fda.hhs.gov by phone at (949) 608-2977 and reference unique identifier **CMS 532739**.

Sincerely,
/S/

CDR Matthew R. Dionne
Acting Director, Division of Pharmaceutical Quality Operations IV

[1] We remind you that there are conditions other than those discussed in this letter that must be satisfied to qualify for the exemptions in section 503A of the FDCA.

[2] The specific products made by your firm are drugs within the meaning of section 201(g) of the Act, [21 U.S.C. § 321(g)] because they are intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of diseases and/or because they are intended to affect the structure or any function of the body. Further, they are “new drugs” within the meaning of section 201(p) [21 U.S.C. 321(p)] of the FDCA because they are not generally recognized as safe and effective for their labeled uses.