

# Bespoke, top-quality packaging: covered

Many pharmaceutical companies are reliant on blister packaging to protect their products, and coldform foil is becoming increasingly popular. Cora Helberg and Willi Zuser from **Constantia Flexibles** discuss these trends and explain how the company succeeds in manufacturing market-leading packaging material.

**A**luminium coldform foil is currently one of the most popular pharmaceutical packaging solutions on the market. Offering superior barrier properties, it ensures that the drug will reach its recipient in perfect condition, unsullied by moisture, light or oxygen.

This is key for many of the newer drugs on the market, which are more exact and therefore more sensitive to atmospheric conditions. Unlike other blister packs, coldform foil is not thermoformed; rather, it is cold-pressed into shape. This creates a 100% barrier against the environment, extending the life cycle of the product and increasing its stability. It is visually high quality, conveying an important message about the product in the absence of any additional evaluation criteria. At the same time, it provides all the advantages for which blisters are known, notably individual dosing, swift time to market and ease of use.

## Packaging trends

Whether altering the branding or addressing more functional concerns, there are many reasons to seek out an innovative packaging solution. It can make products more attractive and easier to use, as well as keeping costs down. Most recently, there has been a major push towards anti-counterfeiting measures and solutions designed to promote compliance.

"We see three main trends on the market at the moment," says Cora Helberg, marketing and innovation manager at Constantia Flexibles. "One of them is brand differentiation, which is important for reducing counterfeiting. Another is the need for easy dosing solutions, for example stick packs and sachets. The third trend is senior-friendliness and child resistance."

Of course, while all these aspects are critical, it is important not to overlook the key function of pharmaceutical packaging, which is simply to protect the product.

## Live Stress Check

Constantia Flexibles produces high-quality coldform foil under clean room conditions. While the company also provides blister lidding foil, stick pack laminates and sachet laminates – alongside many other solutions – coldform is a key point of focus. The company employs dedicated production equipment, with state-of-the-art camera inspection systems, to ensure the product meets all customer specifications.

As a major supplier to the pharmaceutical and healthcare market, Constantia Flexibles is committed to improving its offering and considers product innovation to be key to its success. Most recently, the company introduced Live Stress Check, a new

tool supporting its technical field service. The tool is designed to determine the stress level applied to cold form foil when running on the blister line and the quality of the forming process.

"We print a pattern of high-resolution dots onto our packing material and, if the material is stretched, this pattern changes, showing us the stress level on every mm<sup>2</sup>," explains Willi Zuser, product manager of coldform foil. "We take the materials from the packaging line with deformed cavities and a stretched grid pattern, and use special software and a camera system to inspect the distortion. Then we get a 3D picture that shows us how much the material is stretched in all the areas on the blister. From there, it is possible to optimise the process and the shape of the cavities."

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## Stay strong and prosper

So far, this tool has shown great success, but it is not the company's only point of difference. Constantia Flexibles places a strong emphasis on bespoke solutions and develops many innovations in collaboration with customers. Seeing itself as far more than a packaging supplier, the company is also integrally involved in the development and marketing process. Its customer base benefits from cutting-edge design and the highest-quality production, along with market-leading processing technologies that range from cylinder manufacturing to embossing.

It's no surprise, therefore, that the company continues to prosper. "We have over 8,000 employees in 50 group companies across more than 20 countries," says Helberg. "We are one of the main suppliers of flexible packaging worldwide for the pharmaceutical industry, and we are a supplier to big pharma organisations as well as contract manufacturers, contract packers and small pharma firms. We try to be a leader in service and innovation."

For companies seeking a package that will tick all the boxes – simplicity, quality and customisability – Constantia Flexibles' flexible packaging solutions are surely worth a second look. ■

## Further information

Constantia Flexibles  
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