

ENIOLA ADESUWA

THE NAIJA PHARMACY "CHEAT SHEET"



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Walking into a pharmacy in Lagos can be overwhelming. I remember standing in the aisle at Medplus, staring at thirty different bottles of vitamins, completely confused. The AC was freezing, the lights were bright, and I just wanted to cry.

Then the pharmacist walked up. I told her what I was looking for, and she immediately tried to sell me a generic "women's multivitamin" that cost ₦15,000. It had absolutely no probiotics in it. They mean well, but they have sales targets to hit.

You cannot afford to guess. Buying the wrong supplement isn't just a waste of money it is the exact reason your BV will come back. This cheat sheet gives you exactly what to look for, so you can walk in, buy what works, and walk out.

1. The Probiotic: Your L-Dominance Army

This is the most important purchase you will make. Do not buy generic stomach probiotics. You need *Lactobacillus Crispatus* and *Lactobacillus Rhamnosus*.

When you go to the pharmacy or search on trusted Instagram supplement vendors, look for these specific brands:

- Optibac For Women: Excellent and usually easy to find in bigger Nigerian pharmacies (look for the purple box).
- Garden of Life (Raw Probiotics Vaginal Care): A premium US brand. More expensive, but works like magic.
- Jarrow Formulas (Fem-Dophilus): Very potent and highly recommended globally.

- Renew Life (Women's Vaginal): A solid option often found in Lagos pharmacies.

Pro-Tip: If you can't find these, check the label. If you do not see *Crispatus* or *Rhamnosus* printed on the back, put it down. Do not let the pharmacist convince you otherwise.

A quick warning about the Lagos heat: Probiotics are live bacteria; heat kills them. Ask if they were stored cool, and put them straight into your fridge at home. Do not leave them in a hot car while sitting in Third Mainland Bridge traffic!

2. The Biofilm Disruptors: Garlic Extract & NAC

You need these to melt the "shield" during Phase 1:

- Garlic Extract: Use odourless capsules (Nature's Bounty, Puritan's Pride, or Vitabiotics). Avoid cooking oil pearls.
- NAC (N-Acetyl Cysteine): This can sometimes be tricky to find in smaller chemists. Ask the pharmacist specifically for NAC. Brands like NOW Foods or Doctor's Best are excellent. If the physical store doesn't have it, trusted supplement vendors on Instagram always stock NOW Foods NAC.

3. The Soak Ingredients

Check your kitchen first, otherwise, look for these:

- Apple Cider Vinegar (ACV): You must buy the raw, unfiltered kind "with the mother." The brand Bragg is the gold standard. You can find it in almost any big supermarket like Shoprite, Ebeano, or Hubmart. When you hold the bottle to the light, it should look cloudy at the bottom. That cloudy stuff is "the mother." Do not buy the cheap, clear, synthetic vinegar. It will burn you and do nothing for your pH.
- Epsom Salt: Plain and unscented only. No lavender or eucalyptus—fragrances will irritate you.

The Aisle of Shame (What NOT to Buy)

While you are in the pharmacy, you will be tempted to walk down the feminine hygiene aisle. Don't do it.

Do not buy Vagisil, Summer's Eve, or any "tropical breeze" soaps. They destroy your acid mantle. Your vagina is not supposed to smell like a flower garden. Leave them on the shelf.

How to Avoid Fakes

Nigeria has a problem with fake supplements. If a deal on Jumia looks too good to be true, it is. Only buy from reputable chains (Medplus, HealthPlus, Alpha Pharmacy) or verifiable Instagram vendors with importation proof.

Check the seal and the expiry date carefully. A dead probiotic is a useless probiotic. Get your supplies ready; tomorrow, we start melting the shield.