

POCKET PHARMA

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2–5 players • 25–40 min • Ages 10+

RULES

Take on the role of researchers in rival pharmaceutical laboratories, each working at the frontier of medical science to create new therapies for some of the world's most prevalent diseases.

Select molecular fragments, craft new drug formulas, and try to create effective treatments while minimising side effects. Each successful launch of a new drug can earn profits for your lab, but which player will have earned the most once the race to create the remedies is over?

SETUP

1. Place the **4 Drug cards** face up in the middle of the play area.
2. Sort the **16 Profit cards** by colour and value into 4 face-up stacks above the Drug cards. Arrange each stack in descending order so that the card with the highest value is on top.

3. Sort the **38 Loss cards** by value, and place these as a supply beside the play area.

4. Shuffle the **8 Threshold cards** and deal them so that each Drug card randomly receives one Efficacy and one Side Effect threshold.

Make sure to **RANDOMISE** the Threshold cards when laying them out. Rotate some of them during the shuffle, and do not change the orientation of each card after you flip it.

Slide these cards under the top edge of the Drug card, so that the symbols on the top edges of the Threshold cards are clearly visible.

5. Shuffle the **96 Fragment cards** and place them as a face-down deck below the Drug and Profit cards. Flip 6 cards from the top of the deck face-up in a line beside the deck to form the display. Leave space beside the deck for a discard pile.

6. The player who most recently took some medicine will be the first player. Players will then take turns clockwise.

To complete setup, deal each player Fragment cards from the top of the deck as follows: deal the **first player 1 card**, the **second player 2 cards**, the **third player 3 cards**, and so on. Lay the cards you receive in a face-up line in front of you: this is your 'laboratory'.



AIM OF THE GAME

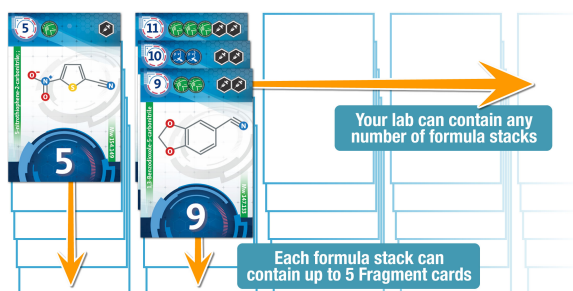
Collect Fragment cards and build formulas in your laboratory that match the formulas on the Drug cards. At the end of the game, the player who has earned the most points in total, taking into account all their profits and losses, wins the game.

FORMULA STACKS

The play area in front of you is your laboratory. Each column of cards in front of you is a 'formula stack', and each stack can contain up to 5 Fragment cards. You may have any number of formula stacks in your laboratory at the same time.

Note: Each Fragment card dealt into your laboratory during setup is the first card in a separate formula stack. You cannot choose to combine them before the game starts.

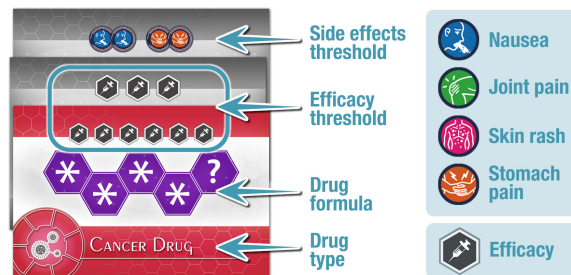
The order of Fragments in a stack does not matter. If you wish, you may rearrange the Fragments within an individual stack at any time.



DRUG FORMULAS

To launch a new drug, you must build a stack of 5 Fragments that contain a pattern of values that matches the drug formula shown in the purple hexes on the target Drug card.

Ideally, you want the total efficacy of your formula to **EQUAL OR EXCEED** the efficacy threshold of the target drug, and you want the total side effects of your formula to either **EQUAL OR FALL BELOW** the side effects threshold of the target drug.



PROFIT AND LOSS

You will generate profits by launching new drugs, and may incur losses when you acquire new Fragments or undertake a clinical trial.

Keep track of any losses you incur by taking the necessary value of Loss cards from the common supply. The Loss cards are not intended to be limited. If you run out, keep track of the player's total losses in any other convenient way. Keep your Profit and Loss cards in a face-down stack in front of you.

HOW TO PLAY

The player who most recently took some medicine goes first. Players then take turns in clockwise order.

On your turn, **TAKE 3 ACTIONS**. Each action can be one of the following three options. You may choose to pass instead of taking an action, but the action is lost and cannot be used on a later turn.

TAKE FRAGMENT

Choose one of the face-up Fragments in the display and play it into your laboratory.

— or —

REFORMULATE

Move any number of Fragments in one of your formulas to another of your formulas.

— or —

LAUNCH DRUG

Nominate one of your formulas and a target Drug formula, then begin a clinical trial and launch the drug.

These actions are explained in the remainder of the rules. You may take your actions in any order and may take the same action more than once. You must complete each action before beginning the next.

TAKE FRAGMENT

Choose one Fragment card in the display and play it face up into your laboratory. You may either add the card to an existing formula stack, or lay it on its own to begin a new formula stack.

The Fragment card furthest from the deck is at the 'front' of the display. You may take this card taken without incurring a loss.

If you take a Fragment within the display, you incur a loss of -1 point for each Fragment card that is **AHEAD** of the card when you take it.

Do not immediately flip a new Fragment card to replace the one you took. You will refill the display at the end of your turn.



This player takes the '9' Fragment. There are no cards in the display ahead of this card, so the player incurs no loss.



In the same turn, the player then takes the '10' Fragment. There are now only two cards in the display ahead of this card, so the player incurs a -2 point loss.

After you take a card, immediately add the new Fragment to one of your existing formula stacks to create a column of overlapping cards, or lay it beside your other cards to begin a new formula stack.

Once you have placed a Fragment cards into your laboratory, you cannot move it to a different formula stack unless you use a reformulate action in a later turn.

Each formula stack can contain up to 5 cards. If you add a sixth card to a stack, you must immediately discard one of the other cards.

REFORMULATE

Choose one or more of the Fragments in one of your formula stacks, and move them all to one of your other formula stacks.

You may move any number of Fragments in a single formula stack to a different stack, or combine all of the Fragments in two stacks into a single stack.

You cannot split up the cards you move. You must either add them all to the same stack, or lay them together beside your other stacks to create a new stack.

If there are now more than 5 cards in the formula stack to which you added cards, you must immediately discard cards of your choice from that stack to reduce the number to 5 cards.

LAUNCH DRUG

When you launch a drug, take the following four steps:

1. Nominate formula
2. Clinical trial — side effects
3. Clinical trial — efficacy
4. Generate profit

1. NOMINATE FORMULA

You may only nominate a formula stack if it contains 5 Fragments which have a combination of values that match the target drug formula. The order of Fragments in your formula does not matter.

Cardiovascular

Your formula stack must contain two sets of two matching Fragments (“two pairs”), plus any one additional Fragment.
for example: 3-3-10-10-4, 4-4-5-5-4 or 2-2-2-2-1

Psychiatric

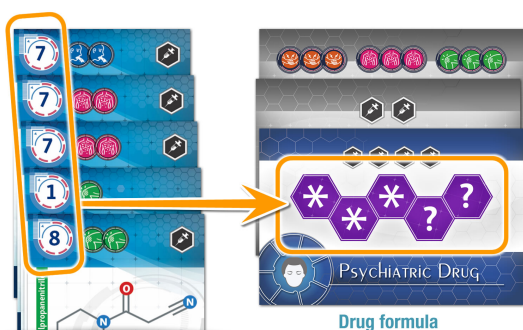
Your formula must contain one set of three matching Fragments (“three of a kind”), plus any two additional Fragments.
for example: 7-7-7-1-8 or 9-9-9-7-7

Neurological

Your formula must contain five Fragments in a consecutive numerical sequence (“straight”).
for example: 1-2-3-4-5 or 7-8-9-10-11

Cancer

Your formula must contain one set of four matching Fragments (“four of a kind”), plus any one additional Fragment.
for example: 1-1-1-1-12 or 5-5-5-5-5



2. CLINICAL TRIAL — SIDE EFFECTS

Count the number of each different side effect symbol on all the cards in your formula, and compare this to the side effect thresholds of the target drug. Only compare the side effects types that appear on the Threshold card. **IGNORE** any symbols on your formula of side effect types that do not appear on the Drug’s Threshold card.

If the side effects of your formula are **ABOVE** the drug’s threshold, the work of your laboratory is disrupted. For **EACH** side effect symbol that your formula has that is above the target on the Threshold card, you must discard 1 Fragment card of your choice from one of the **OTHER** formula stacks in your laboratory.

If you have no other Fragment cards in your laboratory, there is no alternate or additional penalty.

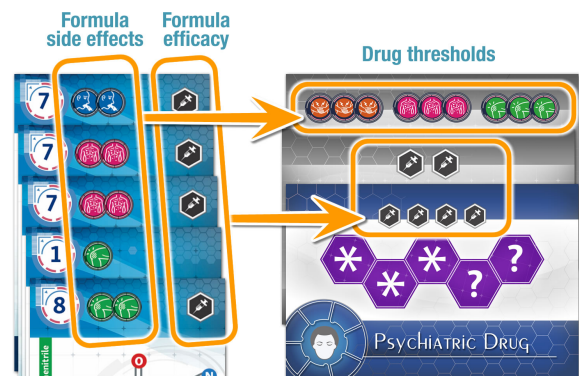
If the side effects of your formula are **EQUAL TO** or **BELOW** the drug’s threshold, your clinical trial is a success and there is no disruption to your laboratory’s work.

3. CLINICAL TRIAL — EFFICACY

Count the number of efficacy symbols on all the cards in your formula, and compare this to the total number of efficacy symbols on the target Drug card and its efficacy Threshold card.

If the efficacy of your formula is **BELOW** the target drug’s overall efficacy requirement, the launch of your new drug incurs a -1 point loss for **EACH** efficacy symbol below the threshold (see example below). Keep track of losses by taking the necessary Loss cards from the common supply.

If the efficacy of your formula is **EQUAL TO** or **ABOVE** the Drug’s threshold, you incur no losses.



Side effects: The drug’s thresholds are 3 stomach pain, 3 skin rash and 3 joint pain. The side effects of the player’s formula contains 4 skin rash side effects, and so exceeds the skin rash threshold by 1. The player must therefore discard 1 Fragment card of their choice from their laboratory. The 2 nausea side effects of the player’s formula can be ignored since the drug’s thresholds do not include this type.

Efficacy: The drug’s efficacy threshold is 6. The efficacy of the player’s formula is 4. The player must incur a -2 point loss.

4. GENERATE PROFIT

Take the top Profit card from the stack below the target Drug card and keep it face down with your other Profit and Loss cards. Then, discard the 5 Fragment cards in your formula.

When all of the Profit card below a particular Drug card have been taken, players cannot launch drugs of that type.

After you launch a drug, you must discard all of the Fragments used in your formula. You do not automatically take new Fragments to replace them.

END OF TURN

Slide the cards remaining in the display forwards (away from the deck) and then flip new cards from the deck to fill the gaps left behind these cards so that the display once again contains 6 cards.



If the draw deck is exhausted, shuffle all of the cards in the discard pile and place them face down to create a new deck.

Play now continues clockwise.

END OF THE GAME

Keep playing until, at the end of a player's turn, the following number of Profit stacks are exhausted:

- **2 or 3 players:** Play until 2 stacks of Profit cards are exhausted.
- **4 or 5 players:** Play until 3 stacks of Profit cards are exhausted.

When this happens, continue until playing until the player seated to the right of the start player completes a turn (so that all players take the same number of turns), then end the game.

Everyone now reveals all of the Profit and Loss cards they collected.

Calculate your final score by adding up the value of your Profit cards and taking away the total value of your Loss cards. Fragment cards remaining in your laboratory have no value.

The player with the highest score is the winner. If two or more players are tied with the highest score, the tied player with the highest valued individual Profit card wins.

R&D EXPANSION

The R&D Expansion consists of 40 cards, split into four modules:

1. **Advanced Drugs** (4 cards)
2. **Specialists** (20 cards)
3. **Market Forces** (8 cards)
4. **Experimental Fragments** (8 cards)

You may add the modules in the game in any combination, including playing with all four modules at the same time.



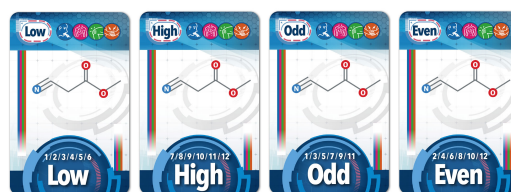
1 Advanced Drugs (4 cards)



2 Specialists (20 cards)



3 Market Forces (8 cards)



4 Experimental Fragments (8 cards)

1. ADVANCED DRUGS

SETUP

During setup, use the 4 Advanced Drug cards. Put the regular Drug cards back in the box.

HOW TO PLAY

Each drug requires a new combination of Fragment cards:

Cardiovascular

Your formula stack must contain one set of three Fragments in consecutive numerical sequence, plus one set of two matching Fragments.

for example: 1-2-3-12-12 or 4-5-6-6-6

Psychiatric

Your formula stack must contain one set of three matching Fragments, plus one set of two matching Fragments (“full house”).

for example: 7-7-7-1-1 or 9-9-9-10-10

Neurological

Your formula stack must contain sets of cards in the following order and in consecutive numerical sequence: two matching Fragments, then a single Fragment, then another two matching Fragments.

for example: 1-1-2-3-3 or 8-8-9-10-10

Cancer

Your formula must contain five matching Fragments.

for example: 1-1-1-1-1 or 5-5-5-5-5

2. SPECIALISTS

SETUP

Give each player an identical set of four Specialist cards:

Pharmacologist, Chemist, Molecular Biologist & Clinician. Put any unused Specialist cards back in the box.

Keep your four Specialist cards face up in your laboratory.

HOW TO PLAY

On your turn, you may use the ability of a face-up Specialist card at any time, in addition to your three regular action. Using the ability of a Specialist does not use one your of actions.

When you use a Specialist, carry out the action on the card, and then flip the card face down. During the game, you may only use the ability each of your four Specialists once.

- **Pharmacologist:** Take 1 additional action this turn.
- **Chemist:** Discard all of the cards currently in the display and then refill the display with 6 new cards drawn from the top of the deck.
- **Molecular Biologist:** Draw 2 cards at random from the top of the deck and add both to your laboratory. Each card can be added to an existing formula or used to begin a new one. You do not have to add both of the cards to the same formula.
- **Clinician:** During a drug launch, ignore the side effects of **ONE** Fragment card of your choice within your formula stack.

END OF THE GAME

At the end of the game, score an additional **2 points** for each of your Specialists that are face up.

3. MARKET FORCES

SETUP

During setup, shuffle the 8 Expanded Market cards and deal 3 cards face up above the Profit cards. Put the other 5 Market Forces cards away. They will not be used in this game.

END OF THE GAME

At the end of the game, after all players have revealed their Profit and Loss cards, award each Market Forces card to the player who has the most individual Profit cards of the combination of types shown.

Each Market Forces card is worth an additional **3–6 points** to the player who wins it.

TIE BREAK: IMPORTANT!

If two or more players are tied with the same number of individual Profit cards of the types shown, award the Market Forces card to the tied player who incurred the **SMALLEST** total loss during the game. **DO NOT** award the card based on the combined value of the Profit cards under consideration. In the unlikely case that players remain tied, those tied players each receive the additional points.

4. EXPERIMENTAL FRAGMENTS

SETUP

During setup, shuffle the 8 Experimental Fragment cards and place them face down as a separate deck somewhere in the play area. Then flip the top card face up.

HOW TO PLAY

On your turn, you may use **TWO** of your actions to take the face-up Experimental Fragment and add it to your laboratory.

The Experimental card can take the place within a drug formula of one regular Fragment card of a value that matches the Experimental Fragment’s label: **Low** (1–6), **High** (7–12), **Odd** or **Even**. You do not need to declare a value for the Experimental Fragment until you use it within a formula stack to launch a drug.

After you take an Experimental Fragment, immediately flip the next Experimental Fragment card face up.

If you launch a drug which includes one or more Experimental Elements, put the regular Fragment cards on the discard pile as normal, and place any Experimental Fragment cards face down on the **BOTTOM** of the Experimental Fragment deck.