

Louisiana Pharmacists Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Louisiana Pharmacists Association Educates about the Use of Internet Pharmacy
Services**

An increasing number of patients are utilizing the internet to obtain prescription medications. In doing so, they may be unknowingly placing themselves or their family members at harm by obtaining medications that are either not approved by the Food and Drug Administration or not appropriate for the patient's needs. FDA ensures that all medications approved for sale in the United States are tested and reviewed and are manufactured with good manufacturing practices in an FDA approved facility. The potential dangers of ordering prescription drugs via the internet include:

- Drugs from unlicensed distributors that are contaminated, counterfeit, sub-potent, unknown or unapproved drugs and/or ingredients.
- A prescription for a drug via a medical questionnaire to diagnose the underlying illness profoundly increases the risk of receiving the wrong drug.
- An increased risk of side effects and other problems like drug interactions since the internet site's knowledge of the patient is limited and incomplete. The FDA reports that patients either have been seriously harmed or died after taking medications obtained via websites' instructions without proper medical examinations.

Side stepping the pharmacist; pharmacists play a very important role in educating the patient on the proper use of the medication, potential side effects, and possible interactions that may occur with the concomitant use of prescription drugs, OTCs, herbals, and foods that may be consumed.

Patients should be aware that it is illegal to ship unapproved prescription drugs into the U.S. even if the drug is legal in the pharmacy's country of origin. LPA encourages all pharmacists to develop meaningful client-based relationships with their patients in order to provide optimal patient care. By encouraging patients to seek direct face-to-face care when obtaining their prescriptions, pharmacists have the opportunity to maximize patient outcomes by providing additional medication therapy management services.

Resource:

<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/BuyingUsingMedicineSafely/BuyingMedicineOvertheInternet/ucm202675.htm>

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The Louisiana Pharmacists Association, established in 1882, strives to promote the interests of all pharmacists of the State of Louisiana. For more information about the LPA and its benefits, contact Julie Fuselier or Phyllis Perron, LPA Co-Executive Directors at 225/346-6883 or visit our website at www.louisianapharmacists.com.

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