

Safety Tips for Using Online Pharmacies

An increasing number of consumers are replacing a trip to the pharmacy with a trip on the Internet. While there are online pharmacies that provide legitimate prescription services, there are also some questionable sites that make buying medicines online risky.



Choose an online pharmacy carefully

- Do business only with a licensed U.S. pharmacy. Check with the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy to determine if the site is licensed and in good standing. Visit www.nabp.net or call 847-391-4406.
- Make sure the pharmacy is registered with the Kansas Board of Pharmacy by calling 785-296-4056.

Avoid the following red flags:

- Web sites that only offer a limited range of prescription medications, usually the ones that have received large amounts of media attention such as Viagra, Propecia, and Xenical. Also avoid pharmacies advertising “quick cures” and “amazing results.”
- Web sites that ask you to agree to a Waiver of Liability waiving all your legal rights. Consumers should never agree to a waiver of liability in order to receive prescription drugs.
- Web sites that do not have a VIPPS (Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites) seal on the website. To be VIPPS certified, a pharmacy must comply with the licensing and inspection requirements of its state and each state to which it dispenses pharmaceuticals.
- Web sites that offer to sell drugs without requiring a prescription to be sent by your doctor or local pharmacy by mail, fax, or phone.
- For your safety and health, all prescription medications can only be prescribed by a physician who has developed a physician/patient relationship with you which includes an in-person physical examination. Any company that tries to circumvent these basic laws does not have your best interests at heart.

If you suspect a site is not a licensed pharmacy, report it and any complaints to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration at <http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ProtectYourself/default.htm>.

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