

Title:

Internet Pharmacies: Helpful or Not?

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525

Summary:

Online drugstores offer a lot of features that entice their customers to order from them instead of going to the pharmacy. True enough, choosing to buy medications online is convenient, but it is important to weigh the pros and cons before choosing.

Keywords:

internet pharmacy

Article Body:

The conventional way of buying drugs wherein a person has to drive to the drugstore to fill a prescription is starting to appear as an inconvenience, especially now that internet pharmacies have started appearing left and right. People are now relying on the world wide web to get their medications, all in the click of a button. But are internet pharmacies helpful? Or do they just cause further inconvenience?

Let's start with the advantages most internet pharmacies claim to offer if one should choose to buy medications from them.

- \* It eliminates the need to travel to the pharmacy. All a person needs to order is a computer, a steady internet connection, and a credit card to pay. The medicine is delivered straight to your doorstep. No need to pick up the order package from some place.
- \* The medicine prices are less expensive. Compared to prices in a conventional drugstores, a lot of internet pharmacies sell medications at a relatively cheaper price.
- \* It also lowers the cost of traveling to the pharmacy and back.
- \* They do not require prescription to sell prescription narcotics to their customers. They claim to be able to diagnose and write a prescription just by reading the information you submit through their online medical questionnaires.

The advantages mentioned above do come with its negative aspects, these

disadvantages include:

- \* Identity theft. Other people may use another person's identity through the personal information entered in the online medical questionnaire supposedly used by internet pharmacies to diagnose and prescribe medications.
- \* Credit card fraud. Financial information entered to pay for order can be used by shady individuals to place unauthorized purchases and orders to different stores.
- \* Knock-off medications. Illegal internet pharmacies may send out counterfeit drugs, out-of-date medications, or drugs in incorrect doses.
- \* Serious drug interaction. As these online pharmacies do not require a valid prescription, they may sell you medicine that may cause a serious drug interaction or trigger an allergic reaction.

With all the pros and cons laid out to you, here are a few tips on how to distinguish a good internet pharmacy:

- \* Check the National Association of Board of Pharmacy (NABP) if the online drugstore you are checking out is a Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Site (VIPPS).
- \* Contact your local pharmacy board to determine if the internet pharmacy you're going to order from is licensed to dispense medication in your state.
- \* Have a physical check up to have a proper diagnosis of your condition and an valid prescription for the medication you're going to order online.
- \* Look for internet pharmacies that require a valid prescription before processing your order. Even an expert doctor won't be able to come up with a precise diagnosis by just reading a medical questionnaire.
- \* Look for online drugstores that offer the service of a licensed pharmacist to assist in you with any queries or concerns regarding the medicines.

Even if online pharmacies offer a lot of convenient features, there are a lot more things you need to consider than just that. Your safety and your health may be put in jeopardy just because you thought a short trip to the pharmacy was too much of a hassle.