

Buying Drugs Online (Internet)

Buying products over the Internet is a private and easy way to shop. Online drug stores let you shop for medicine from your computer. But you should know what you're getting into before you buy.

What are some good points of buying drugs online?

- It's easier to get products. This is helpful for people who can not leave their homes or live far from a drug store.
- You can check many different sites to compare products and prices.
- You can ask a pharmacist questions in private.

What are some dangers of buying drugs online?

- Some sites offer drugs that have not been approved by FDA. These drugs may not be safe.
- Some sites offer prescription drugs without a prescription. This is against the law.
- The drugs you get may be too old to work. Or they may be defective (have something wrong with them). They may even be fake.

What role does FDA play in Internet drug sales?

- FDA and FTC (Federal Trade Commission) make sure that drug sellers make legal claims about their products. The FDA approves all new drugs that are sold to people.
- FDA can take action against any sites that:
 - makes a false claim or
 - sells prescription drugs without a prescription.
- FDA also enforces U.S. and state laws by working with the NABP (National Association of Boards of Pharmacy) and the FSMB (Federation of State Medical Boards).

How can I buy online safely?

- There is a program that certifies online drug stores to be legal and honest. It is called the VIPPS (Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Site). Websites may choose to apply or not to apply for VIPPS certification. Before using a website, see if it is VIPPS certified.
- Don't buy from sites that offer:
 - prescriptions drugs without a prescription, or
 - products that are not approved by FDA.
- Use sites that let you ask questions of a licensed pharmacist. Buy only from sites based in the U.S. It's illegal and may be unsafe to buy prescription drugs from other countries. Talk to your doctor before using any medicine for the first time.

To Learn More...

FDA's website: <http://www.fda.gov>

To report problems: <http://www.fda.gov/oc/buyonline/buyonlineform.htm>

Or call: 1-301-443-1246

National Association of Boards of Pharmacy: <http://nabp.net>

Or call: 847-698-6227.

**D
R
U
G
S

O
N
L
I
N
E**

TIPS

- Don't buy from sites that sell prescription drugs without a prescription or drugs that are not FDA approved.
- Check out websites with the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy before buying.
- Report problems with online pharmacies to the FDA.
- Always check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting any medicine.