

Health NEWS

Margin Of Error With Your Rx?

(NAPSA)—Some things in life just don't mix. Like oil and water. Cats and dogs. And some medications with each other.

According to a recent study, many Americans who take prescription medications also take multiple non-prescription drugs, herbal supplements and vitamins. And therein lies the rub. "The potential for interactions among these drugs can pose a real danger to consumers," said Henri R. Manasse, Jr., Ph.D., Sc.D., president of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), the organization that released the study. "Consumers should know that they can always turn to their pharmacist for answers to their medication-related questions."

To ensure that you take your medications safely, ASHP has released recommendations that include the following:

- Keep a list of all drug therapies, including prescription and non-prescription drugs, home remedies and medical foods and show it to your health care provider.
- Communicate actual self-medication practices to health care providers, especially if how the medication is taken varies from the originally prescribed directions.
- Contact a health-system pharmacist with any questions regarding treatments or medications.
- Learn the names of prescribed drug products as well as their dosage strengths and schedules.
- Ask if there are certain foods, beverages, other medicines



It's all in the mix—it's wise to watch what you mix with your medications.

or activities that should be avoided while taking a prescribed medication.

- Request any written information available on the drug product.
- Question anything that is unclear or that does not seem right.
- Be alert to unexpected changes, such as receiving a prescription refill that seems to have a different strength or appearance from your original prescription.

ASHP is the 30,000-member national professional association that represents pharmacists who practice in hospitals, health maintenance organizations, long-term care facilities, home care, and other components of health-care systems.

For more information on the safe and appropriate use of medications as well as the latest health care news, log onto ASHP's consumer Web site www.safemedication.com.