



Health Bulletin



Medicine Cabinet Makeovers A Must

(NAPSA)—While many American adults say they perform regular tune-ups on their cars (54 percent) or update their wardrobes to reflect the season (49 percent), they often overlook the need to revamp their medicine cabinets on an annual basis. By ignoring this fairly simple task, consumers may be putting their health at risk.

“It is very important to thoroughly review the contents of your medicine cabinet on an annual basis,” said Jan Engle, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Clinical Professor of Pharmacy Practice at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Pharmacy. “This annual review serves three purposes. It allows consumers to make sure that they have the most appropriate and effective products on hand to treat a variety of ailments. It also provides an opportunity to make sure that products are stored properly and have not expired. It’s important for people to realize that ignoring the expiration and storing instructions on their medications may pose a potentially harmful risk to their health.”

According to a recent survey commissioned by McNeil Consumer & Specialty Pharmaceuticals, a division of McNeil-PPC, Inc., and conducted by Harris Interactive, only 31 percent of American adults report cleaning out their medicine cabinets annu-



HAS YOUR MEDICATION EXPIRED?—An annual checkup of your medicine cabinet is a healthy idea.

ally. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration provides helpful information to consumers about over-the-counter (OTC) medications through informative Web sites that remind patients to check expiration dates frequently. Alarming, survey findings indicate that nearly half of American adults have knowingly taken an expired OTC medication.

“People tend to keep themselves busy with everyday household management activities, like doing the laundry or picking up groceries, and updating their medicine cabinets is certainly not a number-one priority,” said Genevieve Gorder, a makeover guru who is speaking out to educate Americans on how to take

control of their medicine cabinets. “Something as simple as cleaning out your medicine cabinet monthly to toss expired medicines and restock essential remedies makes a world of difference.”

It is important to know where OTC and prescription medications should be kept in the home. The American Pharmacists Association claims that overexposure to moisture, heat and humidity may change the potency of certain drugs. Therefore, keeping certain medications in a bathroom or kitchen cabinet is not always recommended. Additionally, medications should always be kept in their original packaging. This ensures that the full dosing instructions, drug interactions, expiration information and storing conditions are available at all times. Medications should never be combined into one bottle for easier storing.

Must-haves for every medicine cabinet include pain relievers like Tylenol®, antacids such as Pepcid Complete® and first-aid items like Band-Aids®. Survey findings also indicate that antacids/anti-diarrheal products and low-dose aspirin, such as Imodium A-D® and St. Joseph® 81-mg Adult Aspirin, are among the common products that adults who have a medicine cabinet tend to keep in theirs.

For more information on how to maintain a healthy medicine cabinet, visit www.mymedcab.com.