



HEALTH AWARENESS

Understanding The Risks Of Importing Meds

(NAPSA)—A growing number of medical experts believe that importing prescription drugs into the United States is bad medicine. In April 2005, Rudy Giuliani called for a halt to all importation schemes until the safety and security issues they raise can be resolved. And members of both the Clinton and Bush administrations say the money possibly saved by importing drugs from overseas is not worth the potential costs to the safety of America's medicine supply.

Recently, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) launched the first-ever online research clearinghouse so that patients and consumers can learn firsthand the opinions of experts on the dangers associated with importing medicines.

"This site will help people understand the wide scope and depth of information that demonstrates that importing prescription drugs outside of the FDA delivery system puts patients at risk. It also points patients to safe, legal importation if they need help with their prescription drugs," says Billy Tauzin, president and CEO of PhRMA.

The site can be found at www.buysafedrugs.info. A sampling of the site's content includes:

- Ways consumers can identify counterfeit or tampered drugs and how to alert authorities to potential counterfeit drugs.
- Facts about the Canadian government's refusal to verify the safety of drugs sold to Americans.



Consumers can now go online to get the facts about importing prescription drugs.

- The Giuliani Report on the safety and security risks of drug importation.
- Why the U.S. Surgeon General has rejected importing drugs as a cost-savings measure.
- Polling information on why America's seniors don't trust foreign drugs when they learn the drugs may not be from Canada.
- Information on Europe's checkered experience in importing foreign drugs.
- Background on the growing black market in counterfeit drugs and how to protect yourself.

The Web site also details safe, legal alternatives to importation, pointing visitors to various federal and state assistance programs and the pharmaceutical industry's recently formed Partnership for Prescription Assistance (www.pparx.org or 1-888-4PPA-NOW), which matches those in need to programs that provide medicines for free or at reduced cost.

To learn more, visit www.buysafedrugs.info or www.phrma.org.