

HEALTH

Drug Interactions: Some Things Don't Mix

News USA

(NU) - Do you smoke and take birth control pills? Do you take your antibiotic pill with a glass of milk or with an iron pill? Do you use a meat tenderizer on your food while taking diuretics?

Prescription medications are safe and effective by themselves, but they don't always mix well with other products we use every day. The following information is typical of the helpful advice available from your local independent pharmacist.

Food and Beverages

Food and beverages can interact in three ways with prescription drugs. First, they can stop or diminish the action of the drug by preventing it from moving out of the stomach towards the bloodstream. People who swallow an antibiotic pill with milk may not get enough medicine into their bloodstream to stop the infection.

If antibiotics are taken with coffee or fruit juice, the results can be just as bad. Chemicals in those drinks might destroy the drug in the stomach. In most cases, it's best to take medicines with plenty of water. However, there are exceptions, so be sure to talk to your pharmacist.

Second, some food-drug combinations can cause dangerous effects in the body. One of the most serious reactions occurs when drugs for depression (called monoamine oxidase inhibitors) are mixed with foods containing a chemical called tyramine. Putting the two together can

cause very high blood pressure, headaches, vomiting and sometimes even death. The foods to avoid are common: some cheeses (such as Parmesan), red wine, chocolate, yogurt, bananas, yeast and others.

Third, some drugs reduce the body's ability to absorb vitamins and minerals from food. Diuretics, used to eliminate extra water from the body, also remove substances the body needs such as potassium and magnesium. Laxatives, antibiotics and other drugs can also stop vitamins from getting into the body.

Some over-the-counter products should not be mixed with prescription medication. Iron pills, for example, should not be taken at the same time as antibiotics.

Cigarette smoke contains about 400 different chemicals that don't always mix well with prescription drugs.

Alcohol Reactions

Alcohol, including beer and wine, can trigger reactions with drugs of all kinds. When in doubt, don't drink alcohol if you are taking prescription medications without first checking with your doctor or pharmacist.

According to NARD, the national association representing independent retail pharmacists, your chances of having a serious drug interaction are small if you ask your doctor or pharmacist for a list of items to avoid. Tell them about any other prescription and non prescription drugs you are taking, and read labels carefully.

Combination Aids Theory, Answer?

Ten years ago, AIDS was a mysterious, untreatable disease that resulted in death for most patients within a year after diagnosis. But medical science has made significant progress in the battle against AIDS since the human immunodeficiency virus was identified as its cause in 1984.

Today, HIV infection, although still serious, is viewed by many as a chronic condition that can be managed at its various stages. Retrovir[®] brand zidovudine (AZT), the first and only antiretroviral drug indicated as a treatment for adults and children with HIV infection, has

been commercially available in the United States since 1987.

Retrovir slows the progression of HIV infection, allowing asymptomatic infected individuals to stay free of symptoms longer and delaying progression to advanced disease for those with early symptoms. The drug's ultimate impact on survival, when therapy is begun early during infection, is still unknown but is being evaluated through long-term follow-up of individuals enrolled in the original studies, as well as in other ongoing clinical trials. In more severely ill patients, including people with AIDS,

Retrovir prolongs life and reduces the risk and severity of the opportunistic diseases associated with advanced HIV infection.

Retrovir, however, is not a cure for HIV infection, and patients continue to progress in their disease. Retrovir already is used simultaneously with other treatments for opportunistic infections. Researchers hope to improve therapy further by adding other drugs active against HIV to treatment with Retrovir. Clinical trials are underway to study combinations of Retrovir with antiviral agents such as DDC, being developed by the pharmaceutical

company Hoffmann-LaRoche, and DDL, being developed by the Bristol-Myers Squibb pharmaceutical company, as well as with other therapies, such as immunomodulating agents.

It is still too early to know which drugs in combination may improve outcome for HIV-infected individuals. However, the search for safer, more effective anti-AIDS drug therapy will continue. Better drug regimens will emerge in time. In the meantime, however, most experts agree that successful management of HIV infection will be best achieved through some form of therapy.

Hiring Practices Are In Question In Hollywood

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (AP)—In a scathing indictment, the NAACP accused Hollywood of nepotism, cronyism and other discriminatory hiring practices in the television and movie industry.

Blacks are "underrepresented in every aspect" of the entertainment industry and top positions in Hollywood are "totally dominated by white males," the NAACP said in a report released last Monday.

"African-Americans have traditionally been shut out, and our report shows they still are—in the main—shut out," said William Gibson, chairman of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

"We found that several factors have combined to produce this result—nepotism, cronyism and racial discrimination," he told a news conference.

Titled "Out of Focus—Out of Sync," the report said black actresses have a difficult time finding employment and many black performers are relegated to supporting roles.

Although blacks purchase 25 percent of domestic movie tickets, black-owned businesses frequently are not awarded contracts by the entertainment industry, the report said.

Benjamin Hooks, the NAACP's executive director, told reporters it is inconceivable to suggest there isn't a pattern of racial discrimination in Hollywood.

"Most blacks in the industry are frustrated by the lack of opportunity and participation afforded them, and point to the fact that Hollywood is a 'closed shop' with positions of the decision-making and power totally dominated by white males," the report said.

Hooks said much progress has been made, especially in the depiction of

blacks, which he said was once limited to "clowns, buffoons or eye-rolling servants." Nevertheless, he said, "much remains to be done."

Although 19 films from black directors will be released this year,

"Many blacks in Hollywood feel this amounts to little more than a passing trend," the 30-page report said.

The report recommended the industry make commitments to employ and promote blacks and said

the NAACP should open a new Los Angeles office to work specifically with Hollywood.

Hooks said the NAACP will use its economic clout to ensure its recommendations are implemented.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

'Referral for Profit' Opens Doors To Potential Ethical Problems

News USA

(NU) - The stage is set for potential serious ethical problems, not to mention unneeded expense for patients, when health practitioners reap financial gain from referrals for physical therapy, experts warn.

In the nation's capital, U.S. Rep. Pete Stark has raised several issues regarding physician-owned physical therapy services (POPTS), including the use of unqualified personnel to provide physical therapy services.

According to a recent statement by the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS), the issue of physician referrals to physical therapy services in which a physician has a financial interest remains an ethical dilemma in all states.

A physician could own a physical therapy practice and refer patients only when treatment is necessary. But there is potential for abuse.

'Sick Don't Doctor-Shop'

Dr. Arnold Relman, recently retired editor of the New England Journal of Medicine, has been quoted as saying he believes in the free market system. But, there is no such system in health care, he said. "When you are sick, you do not 'shop' for the best doctor," Relman said. "Patients are not customers at

Bloomington." Instead, the provider decides what care is needed and what fee to charge.

If a physician prescribes physical therapy for a patient and also directs that patient where to go to receive the service, the patient is not likely to question that referral.

In the case of physician-owned physical therapy services, this could lead to problems. The facility to which the consumer is referred may not be the most convenient in terms of location or hours. In some cases, the patient could be referred for unnecessary treatments, or treatment could be rendered by non-skilled personnel.

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THE PEOPLE FOR TRUTH

National Tax Payers For Justice Support Yahweh's Release

The People For Truth (PFT) conducted the following interview with the National Tax Payers for Justice (NTPJ) from its Ohio headquarters:

PFT: Who are the National Taxpayers for Justice?

NTPJ: Our organization operates for the benefit of all tax paying citizens. We're a watchdog group, and we support fair treatment for all people, regardless of their race, creed, color, or religion. We support and defend the constitution, especially civil liberties afforded under the constitution, including freedom to worship as you choose. We have members from various religious faiths. We work for a living and we pay our taxes. We fight this country's wars and we obey this country's laws.

PFT: Why is your organization in contact with the PFT; that is, why are you concerned about Yahweh Ben Yahweh?

NTPJ: Simple, to support your efforts to free Yahweh Ben Yahweh and his followers. We see that this indictment against the Yahwehs for racketeering is an unconstitutional attack against a religion. Can you believe that they are holding a man for quoting the Bible? It's like all your ads have been stating: "If it can happen to Yahweh Ben Yahweh, it can happen to you."

If they're successful with this religion, then any person or organization they target as a potential threat to their political, philosophical, or religious beliefs is next. Now that's frightening! This one case against the Nation of Yahweh brings too many issues so close to home.

PFT: You mentioned the PFT ads. Which one or ones moved your group to act with us at this point?

NTPJ: The \$50/50 strategy ad, especially, if we can understand that by splitting our vote among the parties, we can elect the winning ticket regardless of who wins, we can also come to understand that we are the tax base of this country — rich folks don't pay taxes anyway, and won't if the Bush administration has its way. We need to coalition and unite to get the total tax burden off our shoulders, and get the rich and corporate America to share this weight like it ought to be.

PFT: So, how will this understanding help us as a people?

NTPJ: By showing us that as the purse behind the government spending, we no longer have to sit idly by while agencies we support with hard earned tax dollars go after any group to destroy; it's obvious to us that the courts and justice department are being used to attack the Nation of Yahweh to destroy a whole church because they don't like the economic and political strength it was gathering.

PFT: What does this say to those government agencies?

NTPJ: That we require accountability from Congress and the Senate, not just on how they spend our money, but how they support laws like pre-trial detention to slowly dismantle away our constitutional rights. This also says to the government that we taxpayers, the majority, working class of this country, supply their salaries and very jobs. As the support structure of



this country, we no longer have to beg; we will not beg our representatives to do what is right, and right is upholding the constitutional guarantees to Yahweh Ben Yahweh and his church. Taxpayers always have the right to withhold our money from an unconstitutional government and to remove unsavory public servants.

PFT: What would you like to convey to all U.S. citizens?

NTPJ: Simply, don't give up your rights. It is our sovereign duty to nullify and refuse to accept bad or misapplied laws as a fundamental right of citizenship. We must act together. To begin, get the message to our elected leaders that selective persecution of any group will not be tolerated.

PFT: Thanks for sharing with us.
NTPJ: No problem. Glad we can help get the word out.

Why is the U.S. Government attacking Yahweh Ben Yahweh? Why does the government want to put an end to his good works? What if Yahweh Ben Yahweh is the Christ promised to return? To find the answers to these questions, watch "From Poverty To Riches" featuring the Honorable Yahweh Ben Yahweh every Thursday at 7:30 pm on channel 4 (Carolina Cable). Also order your copy of "From Poverty To Riches - The Works of Yahweh Ben Yahweh" by sending a \$50 cashier's check or money order only per book to: PEES Productions, P.O. Box 1768, Sequin, TX 78755.

If it can happen to Yahweh Ben Yahweh, it can happen to you!



Show your support for human and constitutional rights by signing the petition below and sending it to the return address. Invite your family, friends, and co-workers to sign as well.

Petition

We, the people, demand the immediate release and constitutional fair treatment of Yahweh Ben Yahweh and the other incarcerated members of the Nation of Yahweh.

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ CITY/STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____

Mail petition to: **The People For Truth • P.O. Box 1632 • Durham, NC 27705**

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