

WHY YOU SHOULD NEVER BUY NUTRACEUTICAL SUPPLEMENTS AT DISCOUNTED ON-LINE STORES.

The Center for Health & Wellness wants to make sure our patients get the best care possible. That doesn't end once you leave our office. We have all heard of the term "buyer beware" and it is important to us to keep our patients informed about everything including the supplements they may be getting on-line.

On-line shopping is a very common practice nowadays for getting products into our homes. When we go on sites like Amazon and Ebay, we are trying to save money and get things for bargain prices and because it is convenient and easy. For some products, the Internet is great for shopping, but in some areas, you could be shelling out money for worthless, and sometimes stolen products. Why are nutraceuticals cheaper at on-line stores you may ask? It's not because the local pharmacy or doctor's office is looking to overcharge customers by inflating pricing, it's because most "bargain" supplements you find on-line may be worthless, expired, counterfeit, stolen, and may even cause health issues.

According to the World Customs Organization and the IACC, if not for terrorism, counterfeiting would be the most significant criminal act of the early 21st century. The IACC (International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition) estimates approximately \$600 billion is lost in annual revenue due to counterfeiting legitimate companies that actually hold the brand name. Yes, this is all types of counterfeiting, but consumers would be disgusted if they truly knew how prevalent counterfeit nutraceuticals actually are. Counterfeiters are very clever in how they are able to get away with it.

How They Do It:

1. Counterfeiters will create a pill or capsule that "mirrors" a name-brand nutraceutical supplement then creates look-alike packaging that is almost identical to name-brand packaging then sell them for cheaper prices.
2. They will buy expired products at very discounted pricing or buy soon-to-expire nutraceuticals from legitimate companies then alter the dates on the packaging then sell them as new and the consumer is none the wiser.

3. Counterfeiters thrive on these types of situations as they can purchase legitimate nutraceuticals and then fool the consumer. This is a dream come true for counterfeiters.

4. Some counterfeiters break the law even further and steal products. They may break in to legitimate warehouses and take large quantities then sell them on-line at a huge profit.

5. Another scenario for stolen products is employee theft. An employee at a genuine nutraceutical company will steal supplements, then sell them to counterfeiters on the black market for extra income.

Regardless of the scenario, the result is always the same, the unknowing consumer ultimately pays the price. You should only buy nutraceuticals directly from the wholesaler, from a reputable pharmacy and/or from a healthcare provider. Always remember these simple rules when buying nutraceuticals on-line: If it's cheap, avoid it; if it seems fake, it probably is; if it is VERY discounted, it is almost certain it is fake! By shutting down counterfeit Internet sales, consumers will only get authentic, effective, and safe nutraceuticals.

Pedigree laws are currently being implemented due to the increased prevalence of counterfeited products available on-line. Xymogen is one nutraceutical company that understands the importance of keeping nutraceuticals off of the black market and has started implementing an eVP number to all products. An eVP is an electronic record that tracks and traces the ownership of the product, from beginning of packaging to the end user. This gives consumers the peace of mind that they are getting exactly what they are paying for and is protecting the consumer's health. Practitioners also have the confidence to prescribe the nutraceutical and know it is coming from a reputable source. At this time, Xymogen is one of the very few nutraceutical company that is 100% unavailable on Amazon, Ebay, Webvitamins.com, and other on-line retailers.