

Do you consult with a pharmacist when you pick up your prescription?

No.

Sometimes.

Yes.

Uh, not usually.

The prescriptions I get, I don't need to.

Um, no I don't.

What if I told you that taking an extra minute to talk with a pharmacist could save your life?

I never thought about that.

Well that would be worthwhile, yes.

I know that that's just following through with that knowledge.

I would agree with you and the older I get the more I realize that.

A pharmacist review of the drugs you've been prescribed is the last chance for a healthcare professional to catch an error on your medications.

The California State Board of Pharmacy wants you to know the facts.

Make sure that you got the right drug at the right strength for the right person. Medication mistakes could be dangerous, even life threatening, but you can take steps to help prevent errors.

First, is it the right drug? Many drugs have similar sounding or looking names.

Lamisil and Lamictal may sound similar, but they're for two completely different conditions.

Lamisil treats toenail fungus infections and Lamictal is used to prevent seizures. Interchanging the two drugs could be life threatening.

Next ask your pharmacist to confirm that you are getting the right strength.

Is the right dose of this children's medicine 2 milliliters or 2 teaspoons?

The wrong dose could mean a trip to the emergency room. Make sure you know how often you should be taking the drug.

"Take this twice a day. Once in the morning and again in the evening."

And whether you should take it with meals or avoid certain foods or alcohol. Some foods can alter the effects of a drug.

Last, check the patient name on the label.

Make sure the drugs you get are yours. Make sure it's the right drug at the right strength for the right patient. If you have any questions about your medications, ask your pharmacist.

If you have a complaint or an inquiry about a pharmacy, call the California State Board of Pharmacy at 1-916-574-7900 or go online and file a complaint at pharmacy.ca.gov

Patient safety, that's the goal of the California State Board of Pharmacy.