

THAT'S MY PHARMACIST

Patients Encouraged to **Get to Know Their Pharmacist**

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MPA encourages everyone to mark their calendars for Oct. 16-22, as we celebrate Michigan Pharmacy Week in conjunction with the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists' National Hospital and Health-System Pharmacy Week and the American Pharmacists Association's American Pharmacists Month. As a widely recognized celebration of the profession, Pharmacy Week is a great opportunity to visit your pharmacy and have a conversation with your pharmacist.

From 1999 to 2009, the U.S. population grew by 9 percent, while the increase in

prescriptions filled was 39 percent. With the average American making frequent trips to the pharmacy for themselves or their family, doesn't it seem odd that most people don't know the name of their pharmacist and may not even have a clear understanding of the prescriptions they take? Your pharmacist is the most accessible health care provider, whose ultimate goal is to keep you healthy and safe. If you haven't before, take advantage of Pharmacy Week and take the opportunity to get to know your pharmacist.

To prepare for a conversation with your pharmacist, it's suggested that you contact the pharmacy to set up an appointment or find out the best time of day to visit. Besides filling your prescriptions, a valuable service that pharmacists provide is

medication therapy management (MTM), so take advantage of the opportunity to review all your medications and treatments. Be sure to bring all of the medications you are currently taking, both prescription and over-the-counter.

While talking with your pharmacist, ask the following questions to make sure you're getting the most out of your medications and taking them safely. Let your pharmacist know of any medications that you are allergic to, and what the reaction is if you take them. Also, be sure to write down the information that your pharmacist gives you, and ask questions if there are things that you don't understand. Consider taking a friend or family member with you if you're concerned that you will forget what your pharmacist tells you.



For Your Health

Ask your pharmacist these questions to get the most from your medications:

1. What is the medicine for?
2. Is a generic available for this medicine?
3. How do I take it? How long do I take it?
4. What are the possible side effects? What do I do if I experience them?
5. Is this medicine safe to combine with other medicines or dietary supplements I am taking?
6. What food, drink or activities should I stay away from while taking this medicine?

Pharmacists are the medication experts. Whether you live in a rural, urban or suburban setting, you can find a pharmacist who can help you with all of your medication questions. Pharmacists constantly work to prevent medication errors and costly medication problems, as well as increase your quality of life.

The profession of pharmacy touches patients in all health care settings, including:

- Community pharmacies
- Long-term care facilities
- Health-systems
- Emergency rooms
- Oncology practices
- HIV clinics
- Specialty practices

In each environment, pharmacists are improving patient health and enhancing safety every day. Patients should rely on their pharmacist's expertise and accessibility.

The MPA and Michigan Society of Health-System Pharmacists (MSHP) Public Affairs Committee will be conducting a statewide "That's My Pharmacist" campaign beginning in September and culminating on Wednesday, Oct. 19 when the public will be encouraged to visit their pharmacy, get to know their pharmacist, receive a medication review and ask any questions they might have regarding their medications.

Be sure to listen to public radio stations all over the state to hear the "That's My Pharmacist" campaign. Each week, listen for a different message focusing on the following areas: pharmacist accessibility, medication therapy management, immunizations and patient safety in long-term care. MPA is working with the Michigan Association of Broadcasters (MAB) to conduct the campaign, and Walgreens has generously donated the funding.

Watch *e-news weekly* as we get closer to the start of the campaign for the announcement of how to access the "That's My Pharmacist" Web site, and visit the MAB Web site, www.michmab.com, to view the campaign promotional materials in their "Associate Member Spotlight" section.

Pharmacist and technician members can also access promotional materials for the "That's My Pharmacist" campaign on the MPA Web site. These materials were created in 2010 from a National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations grant, and we encourage you to print the materials and post them in your pharmacy. These materials can be accessed in the "Patient Education Library" section under "Practice Resources."

If you have questions about the "That's My Pharmacist" campaign, please contact MPA Member Services Manager and MPA/MSHP Public Affairs Committee Staff Liaison Allison Drake at (517) 377-0241 or Allison@MichiganPharmacists.org.

For more information, ask your pharmacist!

This information is provided by Michigan Pharmacists Association and: