



Consumers Can Help Prevent Harmful Medication Incidents

SafeMedicationUse.ca Newsletter

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You Asked Us: “Should I Change My Pharmacy after a Mistake?”

Your pharmacist is a trained healthcare provider who has a great deal of knowledge about medications. However, pharmacists sometimes make mistakes. We should remember that mistakes can be made by anyone—even someone who is well trained, experienced, and doing their professional best.

There are many reasons for mistakes at a pharmacy, and these reasons may not be related to the pharmacist’s skill or knowledge. ISMP Canada has shared information about mistakes in our newsletters and each one is an opportunity to review systems for improvement. After a mistake happens at your pharmacy, you might be tempted to switch to a new pharmacy.

SafeMedicationUse.ca suggests that consumers think about the following points before making the decision to switch pharmacies:

- Mistakes can be made—even by well-trained, experienced healthcare providers.
- Prescriptions are best filled at a pharmacy where the staff are familiar with you and your medication history. Pharmacists who know you can provide more specific advice about medications and other health services, and this lowers the chance of drug interactions.
- If you switch pharmacies, there is no guarantee that mistakes will never be made at the new location. A responsible pharmacy, one that you may want to stay with and trust, will follow the steps in the newsletter outlining [What to Expect if the Pharmacy Makes a Mistake](#).
- Consider reporting the mistake. You can report it to the [SafeMedicationUse.ca](#) website and/or to the [regulatory college](#) in your province. Learning from reports can help prevent mistakes in other pharmacies.



If you do decide to change your pharmacy, be sure to ask your current pharmacy for a detailed record of your medication history. You can keep a copy for yourself, and also share it with your new pharmacy.

Medication safety bulletins contribute to Global Patient Safety Alerts.

This newsletter was developed in collaboration with Best Medicines Coalition and Patients for Patient Safety Canada.

Recommendations are shared with healthcare providers, through the ISMP Canada Safety Bulletin, so that changes can be made together.

This newsletter shares information about safe medication practices, is noncommercial, and is therefore exempt from Canadian anti-spam legislation.