



# Oregon

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## Medication Safety Information

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As a cost saving measure, some patients do not go to a doctor when they are ill to obtain a prescription. Instead they purchase prescription medications without a prescription from stores or markets that are not pharmacies. Or they may purchase prescription medications directly from websites on the Internet. Purchasing prescription medications on the Internet or from other places that are not pharmacies and do not have pharmacists can be dangerous. It is important to note that many websites that sell prescription medications on the Internet do not follow safe practices or provide quality medications. Instead they often times sell medications that are not approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and may be counterfeit or contaminated. These medications can be harmful. Many fake medications contain too little, too much, or the wrong medicine, and may contain dangerous ingredients.

Purchasing prescription medications from non-pharmacy stores or markets is equally as risky and is also illegal. The prescription medications sold by non-pharmacies also have the potential to be counterfeit or may contain useless or even toxic ingredients. Medical supervision does not exist when prescription medications are not prescribed by a doctor and dispensed by a pharmacist. This may be harmful because certain medications require a prescription. They are not safe for a patient to take on their own. Talking to a doctor about your health concerns and discussing your medications with a pharmacist helps to ensure your safety. Some of the advantages of talking to a pharmacist includes becoming educated on how certain medications may impact your health, allergies and current medications. This level of safety provides the most cost savings in the long run.

If you need assistance paying for your prescription medications there are some programs that may be able to help you. The Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPA) provides access to more than 475 patient assistance programs. To search for prescription drug assistance programs in both English and Spanish visit PPA at [www.pparx.org](http://www.pparx.org). There are many other patient assistance programs that might be able to help you obtain prescription medications at no cost or a significant discount. Visit these websites for more information:

[www.benefitscheckup.org](http://www.benefitscheckup.org), [www.rxassist.org](http://www.rxassist.org), and [www.needymeds.com](http://www.needymeds.com).

You may also visit the Oregon Board of Pharmacy's website at: [www.pharmacy.state.or.us](http://www.pharmacy.state.or.us) for other medication safety material including a medication safety brochure and article available in English and Spanish. Also available is a list of drug disposal locations throughout the State that will accept any expired or unwanted drugs for disposal.