

# Medication Warning

Example of confusing product labeling:



Here's what you can do:

Always inspect the "Drug Facts" label on the package to confirm how many milligrams are in each tablet. Then inspect the individual packaging to make sure of the amount you are supposed to take. It's safest to keep the medicine in its original box.

*This medication error was based on an actual event sent into ISMP's National Medication Errors Reporting Program*

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PREVENT MEDICATION ERRORS

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Facebook posting November 7, 2012 (copied from Facebook posting on 10/24/2013)

Don't overlook the risk of errors because of poor product labeling! Look below at the picture of caffeine pills. The box indicates that each tablet contains 200 mg of caffeine. However, when a hospital nurse was supposed to give 200 mg of caffeine to a patient, she mistakenly gave two tablets. The nurse received only the perforated packet of the two tablets from the pharmacy and was unaware that each tablet was 200 mg. So the patient got 400 mg - equivalent to the amount of caffeine in 4 cups of coffee!

Comment from OLRO:

Even though this is an example of a mistake in a hospital setting it can occur in non-facility based settings too. It is important to keep the medication in the original box so assure all the key information is available when administering medications.

Other examples of misleading labels occur with nutritional products. For example, a similar issue with Citracal's slow release calcium indicates 1,200 mg however, it requires taking two tablets to get a 1,200 mg dose. In this case each pill is only 600 mg.