Medication Warning

ConsumerMedSafety.org
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.