



## The New Jersey Poison Information & Education System

Serving New Jersey Since 1983

Designated regional poison center  
for New Jersey by New Jersey  
Department of Health and Senior  
Services and the American  
Association of Poison Control  
Centers

**Please distribute to the public; your local radio, magazines and newspapers;  
websites; etc.**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

Date: October 2008  
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# **Are You Medicine Smart™?**

## October is Talk about Prescriptions Month

**(Newark, NJ)** – A 45 year old female developed nausea, vomiting, headache, red flushed face, and an increased heart rate after taking Flagyl (Metronidazole), an antibiotic, for the last four (4) days. Upon further inquiry, the patient revealed that she had a glass of wine with dinner that night shortly before these symptoms developed. She did not realize that alcohol should not be consumed when one takes this medication.

All medicines (over-the-counter and prescription) have risks associated with them, as well as, benefits. Since using medications improperly can cause side effects or failure of the medication to work properly, the New Jersey Poison Control Center strongly urges all patients to ask their health care provider, or the Poison Control Center, questions about their medication. Many place themselves or their loved ones at risk of developing a complication by not knowing the active ingredients in a particular medicine or the proper way to take it.

**Make sure to get the following questions answered before taking any medication.**

- *The name of the drug and what is it used for? Is this the brand name or the generic name?*
- *How and when to take the medicine – and for how long?*
- *What foods, drinks, other medications, dietary supplements, or activities to avoid?*
- *What are the common side effects?*
- *Will this medicine work safely with other prescription and over-the-counter medicines and dietary/herbal supplements I am currently taking?*
- *Do I need a refill? When?*
- *How should I store this medicine?*

**You should inform your health care provider of the following:**

- *The name of all prescription and non-prescription medicines and dietary/herbal supplements you are taking.*
- *If you are allergic to any medicine.*
- *If you are having any problems with your medicines.*
- *If you are or could be pregnant.*
- *If you are breast feeding.*

If you are taking medication, be sure to ask your pharmacist or other health care provider for the information you need to take it correctly. Accept the pharmacist's offer to counsel you on your medication. If this is not possible, call the Poison Help Hotline at 1-800-222-1222 to speak with a poison information specialist 24 hours a day/7 days a week to assist you in being "Medicine Smart™".

## **Remember Help Is Just A Phone Call Away! 1-800-222-1222**

located at University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey

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