



Letter to the Editor

Sent via e-mail

Re: Jane Brody's April 8th article entitled "Potential Harm in Dietary Supplements"

Jane Brody's April 8 article, "Potential Harm in Dietary Supplements," points to a need for better communication between doctors and patients who use dietary supplements.

The American Herbal Products Association has, since 2001, recommended that herbal supplement users inform their healthcare providers of such use. AHPA encourages healthcare providers to receive such communication with respect for patients' healthcare choices, and to seek out accurate and truthful information about herbs.

Ms. Brody also expresses concern that a new law, which requires supplement marketers to submit reports of serious adverse events to the Food and Drug Administration, may be flawed by relying on consumers to call in such reports. This law is modeled on a similar law for prescription drugs. Consistent with AHPA's longstanding encouragement of better communication between doctors and supplement users, the rare occurrences of serious adverse events associated with supplements should also be included in such open communication.

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