

## SUPPLEMENTS & THE HRP

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Some alternative medicines, such as glucosamine, do not seem to have ill effects; others, such as the herb ephedra, can cause serious health conditions. Safety issues with supplements include contaminants and adulterations that can occur in herbal remedies.

Many supplements contain active ingredients that have strong biological effects and some interfere with prescription medications.

Supplement safety is not always ensured and as with prescription and OTC medications, dietary supplements **must be reported** so the medical department is aware of your consumption of these supplements and can determine if any adverse reaction could occur.

**Note that “adverse reaction” could include coming up positive on drug/alcohol tests!**

### IN SUMMARY

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The Food & Drug Administration (FDA) regulates prescription and OTC medications to ensure that they are safe and that they work but NOT dietary supplements.

Using supplements and OTC medications without medical evaluation can sometimes be harmful.

Because it is vitally important to ensure that HRP-certified individuals are reliable, they must report all medications (prescription & OTC) AND supplements to Pantex Medical on PX-2273 whenever they start or stop taking something.

Pantex clinicians evaluate the medication OR supplement as it relates to the person’s HRP duties and job requirements and make a recommendation regarding its effects on performance of HRP duties.

*Get all our other brochures, too!*

- 001 – Occupational Medicine Program Overview
- 002 – Understanding Your Blood Chemistry
- 003 – Your Complete Blood Count & Differential
- 004 – Cholesterol & Triglycerides
- 005 – Understanding Your Urinalysis Results
- 007 – Diabetic Control
- 008 – High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)

## CONTACTS!

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## PANTEX OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE

*Healthcare Assessment, Wellness Programs  
& Case Management*

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# Reporting Your Medications

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## **REPORTING MEDICATIONS & DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS**

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The information in this document is based on information supplied by the Department of Energy and Oak Ridge Associated Universities.

Pantex personnel, especially Human Reliability Program (HRP)-certified individuals, must report all prescription drugs, over-the-counter (OTC) medications, and dietary supplements to Pantex Medical on form PX-2273.

The reporting requirement was established because Pantex personnel have access to very sensitive materials and information as they perform their duties. The potential consequences of an unsafe or unreliable worker are serious, and it is important to ensure that the use of prescription drugs, OTC medications, or dietary supplements does not pose reliability or health concerns.

Reporting EVERY medication or supplement taken, prescription or non-prescription, ensures that Pantex Medical is aware of the medication and can evaluate whether the drug or supplement has side effects or interactions that can cause a reliability concern or even damage the individual's health.

### **PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

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The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates prescription drugs because they are not safe to use except under medical supervision. These drugs may be potentially toxic, have other harmful effects, or require medical supervision of their administration.

Prescription medications may have serious side effects that could impair reliability. Report all prescription drugs as soon as you begin taking them.

Do not wait until your next physical to make a report. Use the pharmacy label on the bottle to get information to put on the PX-2273.

### **OVER-THE-COUNTER (OTC) MEDICATIONS**

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Over-the-counter (OTC) drug products are available without a prescription. There are more than 80 therapeutic categories of OTC drug products with uses ranging from acne treatment to weight control. As with prescription drugs, the FDA oversees OTC drugs to ensure that they are properly labeled and beneficial.

Some OTC medications can cause impaired reliability. Read labels CAREFULLY! Report OTC medication with labels warning: "may cause drowsiness, dizziness, excitability" or "use caution when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery" to Pantex Medical. Report, too, if you have a pre-existing condition listed on the medication's label, are taking other medications that could cause drug interactions, or are unsure of the possible effects.

### **DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS**

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A dietary supplement is any product intended to supplement the diet that contains one or more dietary ingredients and is taken by mouth. Examples of dietary supplements are vitamins, minerals, herbs or other botanicals, amino acids, and other substances or components.

**The FDA does NOT review dietary supplements for safety or regulate them!**

### VITAMINS & MINERALS

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Humans must get vitamins and minerals from food because their bodies do not make them.

The Harvard School of Public Health calls taking a daily multivitamin "a sort of nutritional safety net."

Be aware that a standard multivitamin supplement with minerals cannot make up for an unhealthy diet.

### HERBAL REMEDIES

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Herbal remedies, derived from plants, have been used for thousands of years and are becoming increasingly popular to both treat existing illness and prevent maladies such as high blood pressure. Some popular herbal remedies are Echinacea, St. John's wort, ginkgo bilboa, goldenseal, and ginseng.

Herbal remedies may not be effective or safe. They can interfere with prescribed medications, produce bad laboratory results, and adversely affect your health and well-being.

Some liquid herbal remedies have a LOT of alcohol in them & could cause a violation of the 8-hour rule or positive breath alcohol test!

### **EVALUATING SUPPLEMENTS**

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Supplements may help to ensure that you get adequate amounts of essential nutrients or to promote optimal health and performance if you do not consume a variety of foods. However, dietary supplements are not intended to treat, diagnose, mitigate, prevent, or cure disease.

In some cases, dietary supplements may have unwanted effects, especially if taken before surgery or with other dietary supplements or medicines, or if you have certain health conditions.

For example, did you know St. John's Wort can act as a blood thinner?