

FDA JOINS 57 REGULATORY AGENCIES TO MARK FOURTH ANNUAL MEDICINE SAFETY WEEK ON SOCIAL MEDIA



The image shows a patient in a hospital bed, wearing a white blanket and a blue hospital gown. The patient is holding a glass of water in their right hand and several pills in their left hand. The FDA Ghana logo is visible in the top left corner of the image. The text 'THE MED SAFETY MOBILE APP' is prominently displayed in white on a dark blue background. Below this, the tagline 'Safety of medicines in your hands' is written in white. At the bottom of the image, there are logos for 'THE ACCESS AND DELIVERY PARTNERSHIP', 'WEB-RADR', 'MHRA', 'GET IT ON Google Play', and 'Download on the App Store'.

THE MED SAFETY MOBILE APP
Safety of medicines in your hands

THE ACCESS AND DELIVERY PARTNERSHIP
WEB-RADR
MHRA
GET IT ON Google Play
Download on the App Store

The Food and Drugs Authority marked the fourth annual **#MedSafetyWeek** with other medicine regulatory authorities across the world with a social media campaign to raise awareness of medicine side effects, and the importance of reporting them. This year's campaign focused on polypharmacy, with the overarching message that, reporting side effects helps protect patients when taking multiple medicines.

The Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) participated in the annual social media campaign and supported the importance of reporting side effects through the Med Safety App. The App can be downloaded from the app store or google play. **#MedSafetyWeek** is a joint effort between 57 medicine regulatory authorities across the globe.

Polypharmacy is defined as the simultaneous use of four or more prescription, over-the-counter or traditional medicines at the same time. Polypharmacy increases the likelihood of a patient having side effects, due to the increased risk of interactions between medicines, and with foods or herbal products.

Although polypharmacy is common in older people, anyone who routinely uses multiple medicines at the same time can be affected. This includes people with long-term chronic conditions, who regularly take multiple medicines. Studies show that one third of people over 75 years old take at least six medicines, with over a million people taking eight or more medicines daily. Multiple medicines can be beneficial, but it's important to report side effects when they occur.

Patient's susceptibility to experiencing side effects increase with age, when medicines are not being metabolised as efficiently as before or the patient is more sensitive to their effects. Patients who take multiple medicines can also experience increased drug–drug interactions. Reporting side effects help in understanding the benefits and risks of medicines in clinical use and can lead to the discovery of previously unknown side effects and interactions.

This campaign forms part of a global initiative led by Uppsala Monitoring Centre (UMC) – the World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaborating Centre for International Drug Monitoring – in collaboration with the Heads of Medicines Agencies (HMA) and the International Coalition of Medicines Regulatory Authorities (ICMRA).

The FDA is encouraging healthcare professionals to review their patients' medications intake, especially when prescribing and administering multiple medicines, as well as being vigilant to monitor, detect and report suspected side effects using the Med Safety App. Reporting plays an important role in helping the FDA monitor the safe use of medicines to protect public health through effective regulation.