

Hospital Says No More Dietary Supplements in Formulary

This is the headline of an article in Medscape today.

This is a link to the video and text.

http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/812751?nlid=36983_1521&src=wnl_edit_medp_wir&uac=72091AK&spon=17

Some excerpts from the article:

... On July 29 of this year, the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, to my knowledge, became the first hospital in this country to remove dietary supplements from the formulary. We did that because we were caught between a rock and a hard place. The rock was the Joint Commission of Hospital Accreditation, which asks us to treat these products like drugs. Fair enough. They are drugs. They could have a pharmacologic and physiologic effect that is drug-like, so I think that is a very fair request on their part. On the other hand, the Food and Drug Administration doesn't regulate these products as drugs, so for the 54,000 dietary supplements on the market, there isn't a very good safety profile. Probably fewer than 0.3% of those products have any reasonable safety portfolio. Their efficacy claims are often not true. What is worrisome is that the labeling may not be accurate and that, for example, a selenium product, which is said to contain 200 µg of selenium, may in fact contain 40,800 µg as was recently shown with a couple of products.^[1]

... Here is the way it works now: When you come to the hospital, we ask parents whether their children are receiving dietary supplements. ...

... If they are taking supplements, we strongly discourage their use and give them a pamphlet to explain why it is that these products are not what they claim to be. If they still want to use a dietary supplement and we don't consider it to be potentially harmful like St. John's wort, then we give them a waiver and say that they are using this against medical advice. ...