FDA warns consumers against homeopathy

By ACSH Staff — March 26, 2015

Recently, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a warning to consumers and pharmacies not to rely on over-the-counter asthma products labeled as homeopathic. In their alert, they write:

Asthma is a serious, chronic lung condition. If asthma is not appropriately treated and managed, patients may have wheezing, shortness of breath, and coughing, and could be at risk for life-threatening asthma attacks that may require emergency care or hospitalization. Although there is no cure for asthma, there are many prescription asthma treatments approved by FDA as safe and effective, as well as some products that are marketed OTC in accordance with an FDA monograph. And of course, natural homeopathic remedies are not among these safe and effective FDA-approved treatments. As we’ve written in the past, homeopathic remedies (which are in fact just water) cannot harm you, but relying on them to treat possibly life-threatening conditions can have deadly results.

In addition, the FDA announced it would hold a public hearing on homeopathic medicines, scheduled for April 20-21. The purpose of the hearing is to better assess the risks and benefits of all drugs and products labeled as homeopathic. We assume the findings of the hearing will be similar to those of the recent extensive review conducted by Australia’s top council of medical research: homeopathic medicines are not effective in treating any condition.

Currently, manufacturers of homeopathic products are not required to prove their remedies are safe or effective similar to supplements. But unlike supplements, homeopathic remedies can state that they are meant for treating a specific medical condition which can be incredibly dangerous to misguided consumers with serious health concerns (or who think they are being protected from contagious diseases).
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Links