Live Well, Work Well

There are certain drugs that will interact with citrus fruit and fruit juices.

DRUG INTERACTIONS

Prescriptions and over-the-counter (OTC) medications can treat and cure many kinds of health problems, from minor infections to life-threatening diseases. But they can also cause serious and even fatal complications if they're not taken properly.

Knowledge Is Power

Patients must take responsibility for talking to their pharmacists and doctors about all the medications they are taking—including OTC drugs—to ensure that they are taking them properly and that any adverse drug interactions are avoided.

Any time you take two or more drugs, consume alcohol while taking medication, or even eat certain foods while taking medication, a negative interaction can occur and produce dangerous results. Even OTC drugs such as aspirin or cold medication can have an adverse effect when combined with prescription or non-prescription medications.

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), drug interactions fall into the three following categories.

Drug-Drug Interactions

These occur when two or more drugs react with each other. The interaction of multiple drugs may cause you to experience unexpected side effects. For example, mixing a drug designed to help you sleep (sedative) and a drug used to alleviate allergy symptoms (antihistamine) can slow your reactions and make driving a car or operating machinery dangerous.

Be aware of these common drug interactions:

- Antacids reduce the absorption rate for blood thinning drugs. Aspirin, on the other hand, will increase the effect of such drugs.
- Antihistamines used to treat colds and allergies can increase the effect of tranquilizers and some painkillers.
- Some antibiotics—including penicillin, amoxicillin, and tetracycline—may lessen the effectiveness of low-dose oral contraceptives by reducing the amount of hormones absorbed by the body.
- For people with insulin-dependent diabetes, the use of beta-blockers (a type of heart medications) or MAO inhibitors (a class of antidepressants) can reinforce the effect of insulin.

Drug-Food/Beverage Interactions

These result from drugs reacting with certain foods or drinks. For example, drinking alcohol with some drugs may slow your reactions or cause you to feel tired.

Drug-Condition Interactions

These may occur when an existing medical condition makes certain drugs potentially harmful. For example, nasal decongestants may produce an unwanted reaction to someone with high blood pressure.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about potential interactions of the drugs you are taking. For more information, visit http://www.fda.gov and click on the "Drugs" category.

THE RESCHINI GROUP®