



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pharmacists: Widely-used medications can make skin vulnerable to sunlight, may cause severe sunburn or rashes

June 29, 2018 – Richmond, BC – Pharmacists are reminding Canadians to be aware of sun-sensitizing drugs before heading outdoors this summer. Widely-used over-the-counter and prescription medications – such as antibiotics, sulfa-containing medications, and acne treatments – can make skin more vulnerable to sunlight, increasing the risk of sunburn, and in some cases, make the skin photosensitive. This photosensitivity can cause photoallergic or phototoxic reactions to the sun’s UV rays, in the form of painful and itchy rashes, or even blisters and sunburns.

“There are several medications that make your skin more prone to damage with increased exposure to the sun. Reactions are somewhat unpredictable and can be a one-time occurrence, or it can happen each time the drug is taken and sun exposure occurs. Your pharmacist can help determine if your medications are sun-sensitizing and provide advice to reduce your likelihood of a reaction,” says Gianni Del Negro, Pharmacist with London Drugs.

Phototoxic reactions are the most common and result in a sunburn-like rash within minutes or hours of the medication interacting with UV rays. Meanwhile, photoallergic reactions can develop days after sun exposure. They occur when UV rays trigger chemical changes, resulting in the body reacting to the medication as if it is an allergen. Side effects include a red, itchy, scaly rash and in severe cases, blisters.

“Everyone should be proactive about protecting themselves from the sun, but for those on sun-sensitizing drugs, it’s even more critical. Protective clothing and applying sunscreen regularly are two important measures,” adds Del Negro.

Those taking sun-sensitizing medications can also reduce their likelihood of a reaction by being more cautious about their sun exposure.

“If possible, plan your sun exposure for earlier or later in the day to avoid the sun’s rays when they’re at their strongest. Anyone unsure if their medications are sun-sensitizing should speak with a pharmacist.”

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About London Drugs

Founded in 1945, B.C.-based London Drugs has 81 stores in more than 35 major markets throughout British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba including its online store www.LondonDrugs.com. London Drugs offers consumers a range of products from digital cameras and cosmetics to computers and televisions. Renowned for its creative approach to retailing, the company employs more than 7,500 people with pharmacy and health care services being the heart of its business. Committed to innovation and superior customer service, London



Drugs has established itself as a reputable and caring company and continues to position itself for future growth and development. Please follow us! [@LondonDrugs](#)

Pharmacists are available for interviews and to provide advice regarding sun safety and sun-sensitizing medications. To arrange an interview, please contact:

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