

October designated American Pharmacists Month

They are at the top of the list of the most trusted health care provider.

They have four years of professional education, similar to what a physician receives, but with the total focus on drug therapy management. They earn doctoral level degrees in their field and are available to offer their services and expertise without an appointment and free of charge. Even with all their knowledge, experience and access, the American Pharmacist Association found that only 28 percent of people in a 2006 poll knew the name of their pharmacist.

Your pharmacist is a crucial member of your healthcare team. He or she is the one that is responsible for making sure your medication therapy is properly executed, managed and maintained. A visit to your community pharmacist is the finale of your

doctor's visit. It is your pharmacist who takes the time to explain the importance of

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your medication therapy, informs you of side effects, ways to monitor your condition, and the most optimal way to take your medications. To a pharmacist, you are not just another paying customer but a valued patient

whose health and well-being is directly affected by his or her professional pharmaceutical care.

In an effort to improved communication between pharmacists and patients, the Idaho State University College of Pharmacy faculty, staff and students are teaming up with the American Pharmacists Association in celebration of October as American Pharmacists Month. The month-long campaign titled "Know Your Medicine, Know Your Pharmacists," is held to promote

the profession of pharmacy, educate the public on the importance of pharmacists as healthcare providers, and, most importantly, challenge pharmacist to reach out to their patients. This year the ISU College of Pharmacy challenges you, the patient, to get to know your pharmacist...learn their name and don't be afraid to ask for their recommendations.

Pharmacists are not only medication experts on prescription medications, but also over-the-counter medications. My first experience with a pharmacist occurred when I was suffering from allergies over a holiday weekend. I was ready to pay "big bucks" to visit an urgent care when the pharmacist told me not to waste my money when she could tell me the same thing the doctor would tell me. She recommended an over-the-counter antihistamine eye-drop and an oral antihistamine for my allergies. I began the medications and never had to visit the doctor. I had no idea that a

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pharmacist had the training and knowledge to make such a recommendation. Best of all she saved me time and money! Her name was Marcella.

This month's theme is "Know your Medicine, Know your Pharmacist." Do you know the names of the medications that you are taking, and why they have been prescribed? Chances are your pharmacist knows, and your pharmacist has some important information to share with you. Your pharmacist is an integral member of your healthcare team. Take the time to get to know your medication through your pharmacist. Challenge your

pharmacist to demonstrate his or her clinical knowledge and expertise to benefit your health and well being.

The Pocatello community is very fortunate to have the nationally recognized Idaho State University College of Pharmacy in their midst. The College of Pharmacy students strive to reach out to the people of Pocatello through patient care outreach programs. These outreach programs include Operation Immunization, Operation Diabetes, Heartburn Awareness, and Poison Prevention.

Throughout the month of October, keep your eyes open for student pharmacists

in the community holding events to educate the public on issues relating to pharmacy health care and education. Each week the Idaho State Journal will feature an editorial written by a student pharmacist and faculty member. At the conclusion of this month, the students and faculty of ISU's College of Pharmacy will open its doors to you, the Pocatello community, and host an open house on Friday, Oct. 28 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. We will be offering free blood pressure and blood glucose screenings, heartburn education and screening and free adult flu vaccinations to the first 50 guests that come to the open house at the college located at 970 S. 5th Ave. in Pocatello. In the meantime the College of Pharmacy faculty and staff encourage you to get to know your medicine through knowing your pharmacist!

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