FDA Introduces A New Web Site Intended To Give The Public More Insight About Agency's Work

FDA Basics: Site Seeks To Present Information To Consumers And Patients In Useful And User-Friendly Format

(Posted by Tom Lamb at www.DrugInjuryWatch.com on January 12, 2010; see http://bit.ly/7NLjuT)

On January 12, 2009 Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, Principal Deputy Commissioner of the FDA, introduced FDA Basics, which is a new Web resource intended to answer questions from consumers and patients as well as to discuss other important public health topics in a useful and user-friendly format.

Structurally, FDA Basics consists of the following sections:

- FDA Fundamentals
- Animal & Veterinary
- Cosmetics & Color Additives
- Dietary Supplements
- Drugs
- Food
- Medical Devices
- Radiation-Emitting Products
- Tobacco Products
- Vaccines, Blood, and Biologics

Of particular interest to us is the Drugs section of FDA Basics. It includes the three sets of questions set forth below, with each question linked to responsive information:

Drug Approval

What is the approval process for a new prescription drug?

What are over-the-counter (OTC) drugs and how are they approved?

What are generic drugs and how are they approved?

Are generic drugs the same as brand name drugs?

How do I find out if a drug is approved? Is there a Web site I can go to?

How can I get access to a drug that is in testing but has not yet been approved?

Does FDA approve the color additives used in drugs? If so, how does FDA determine their safety?

Information About Drugs

What are the possible side effects of a drug and where can I find the most current information about my drug?

Why do some drug labels get changed so often ?

Does FDA approve the information given out by pharmacies when I pick up my medicine?

Can FDA ban direct-to-consumer drug advertising?

Safety

How does FDA decide when a drug is not safe enough to stay on the market?

What is a Warning Letter?

Why isn't a drug taken off the market when a manufacturer gets a Warning Letter?

How does FDA oversee domestic and foreign drug manufacturing?

During a January 12 webinar for bloggers interested in health-related topics, the FDA's Dr. Sharfstein emphasized that this FDA Basics site was still in the development stage and he encouraged the public to submit comments or suggestions that might help the agency improve the site going forward.

Attorney Tom Lamb represents people in personal injury and wrongful death cases involving unsafe prescription drugs or medication errors. The above article was posted originally on his blog, **Drug Injury Watch** – with live links and readers' Comments.
http://www.DrugInjuryWatch.com