



Public Health Protection Features of the VIPPS Program

- ◆ Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites™ (VIPPS®) does the work for Internet search engine companies and consumers: the VIPPS Seal informs the companies' staff and consumers that the Internet Pharmacy holds a valid license, the pharmacy site has been surveyed, and its operations meet stringent Internet pharmacy practice standards.
- ◆ VIPPS is an additional tool to assist regulators in identifying those online pharmacies, located out-of-state, which are lawfully practicing.
- ◆ VIPPS is International: VIPPS Canada™ will help Canadians and US regulators identify legitimate Canadian pharmacy Web sites.
- ◆ VIPPS is implementing novel ways to educate the public about the dangers of purchasing from rogue sites.
- ◆ VIPPS offers consumers a forum through which they can file complaints about rogue sites.
- ◆ VIPPS receives numerous complaints from consumers who have been defrauded by rogue sites located via Internet searches. VIPPS:
 - Investigates consumer complaints about rogue sites;
 - Counsels consumers who have been defrauded by rogue sites; and
 - Refers rogue sites to appropriate regulatory authorities.
- ◆ VIPPS has a long history of collaborating with state and federal regulators to investigate and shut down rogue sites. VIPPS was especially active in 2001 when numerous rogue sites were launched to sell Ciprofloxacin hydrochloride (Cipro®) for treatment of anthrax. NABP worked with its members and states' attorneys to identify and report rogue Cipro sites.
- ◆ VIPPS program is regularly contacted by the Better Business Bureau and financial institutions to verify unknown online pharmacies.

Why VIPPS Is an Effective Way to Protect the Public from Suspicious Sites that Advertise through Search Engines:

- ◆ Notwithstanding the illegalities, it is unwise to purchase drugs from unknown suspicious entities, many of which advertise on Internet search engines, in light of current world events.
- ◆ Most search engines do not have the resources to determine if a site is legitimate.
- ◆ Any site, domestic or international, which allows consumers to purchase prescription medications without requiring a valid prescription is operating illegally.

