

## **U.S. GROUP ENCOURAGES CANADIANS TO REPORT "ARTIFICIAL SHORTAGES" CREATED BY U.S. PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY CUTBACKS**

### **Consumers Urged to Help Document Woes Created by Manufacturers' Manipulation of Marketplace**

NEWTON, MA.//April 12, 2004//Canadian health care consumers are being encouraged by a nonprofit organization in the United States to help document cases where they are unable to get prescription medications due to supply cutbacks by drug companies seeking to discourage U.S. citizens from buying lower-priced Canadian drugs. The request was made by Results for America (<http://www.ResultsForAmerica.org>), which on November 25, 2003 launched a powerful, consumer-friendly "Canadian Drug Savings Calculator" that consumers have used so far to calculate more than \$32 million in possible savings on prescription medications.

Civil Society Institute President Pam Solo said: "It is appalling for us to contemplate a scenario under which U.S. drug companies create artificial shortages of lifesaving medicines in another country in the hopes of drying up the supply of lower-priced medications for American citizens. This approach hurts Canadian consumers. It hurts U.S. consumers. We want to make sure that drug companies are held accountable for any potentially life-endangering situations they may be creating."

Canadian consumers who find that they cannot fill their prescriptions due to sudden shortages of key medications are encouraged to go to <http://www.resultsforamerica.org/health/medmail.php> and use the form on that Web page. Results For America will collect instances of any reported shortages and report it to Canadian authorities and the news media.

Results for America advised that Canadian consumers of the most popular medications in the U.S. - Accupril, Actosm, Advair Disku, Allegra-D, Alphagan-P, Aricept, Arimidex, Avalide, Avandia, Avapro, Casodex, Celexa, Clarinex, Coumadin, Cozaar, Depakote, Detrol LA, Diovan, Exelon, Flonase, Flovent, Fosamax, Glucophage XR, Hyzaar, Lamictal, Lipitor, Mirapex, Mobic, Nasonex, Neurontin, Paxil, Pravachol, Premarin, Prempro, Prevacid, Prograf, Proscar, Risperdal, Serevent, Singulair, Synthroid, Topamax, Vioxx, Xalatan, Zocor and Zyrtec - should be particularly alert to the potential for manufacturer-created shortages.

Results for America, a project of the nonprofit Civil Society Institute, is not involved in any way in the health care industry or the recent lobbying on Medicare reform.

Unveiled on November 25, 2003, the Canadian Drug Savings Calculator (also available at <http://www.DrugSavingsCalculator.org>) makes it possible for Americans using prescription medications to calculate exactly how much they could save by buying their medications in Canada. The RFA calculator allows consumers to gauge savings on nearly 50 of the most popular prescription medications by picking multiple drugs, different dosage settings and time horizons ranging from one month to 20 years.

For example, the calculator shows that an American consumer who buys the widely prescribed osteoarthritis pain relief medication Vioxx and takes one pill per today would spend \$524.16 a year less at Canadian prices, or a total of \$10,483.20 over 20 years. Similarly, a person taking Lipitor, for treatment of high cholesterol, would

save \$338.52 per year - or \$6,770.40 over 20 years. A U.S. victim of acid reflux taking the medication Prevacid on a daily basis would save \$640.64 a year or \$12,812.80 over 20 years in Canada, according to the calculator.

Prices reflected on the Web site were compiled from the list prices of four different online pharmacy retailers from October 1-7, 2003. Certain price factors that tend to cancel each other out (including inflation and competition-related adjustments in drug prices) are not reflected in the calculator's multi-year results.

#### ABOUT RESULTS FOR AMERICA

Results for America is a project of the Civil Society Institute, which is based in Newton, Massachusetts. The mission of CSI is to serve as a catalyst for change by creating problem-solving interactions among people, and between communities, government and business, that can help to improve society. Visit Civil Society Institute on the Web at <http://www.civilsocietyinstitute.org>.

RFA seeks to shape and tap the tremendous amount of community-level knowledge, experience and innovative action that could solve America's problems in four key areas:

- \* Healthy Families, Healthy Economy, Healthy America. Results for America supports affordable health care and prescription drugs. It also supports a commitment to biomedical technologies and breakthrough treatments and cures for life-threatening illnesses that affect millions of us.
- \* Great Kids, Great Schools, Great Communities. Results for America supports investing in public schools, making sure parents have more of a say in their schools and creating conditions that will lead to learning and success for every child.
- \* Clean Air, Clean Energy, Bright Future. Results for America supports reducing our debilitating dependence on oil and fossil fuels and making sensible investments in alternative energy sources.
- \* Rational Foreign Policy, A Safer World. Results for America supports a rational foreign policy that works in concert with global organizations not in opposition to them. It also supports restoring America to its place in the world community as a nation respected and admired rather than mistrusted and feared.

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