Herbal Products and Prescription Medicine:

Potentially Dangerous Mixtures

Tips from www.FloridaPoisonControl.org

Common interactions are listed below. If you take herbal supplements, ask your pharmacist to check all your medicines for interactions.

If you take this combination ........... this could happen.

- Aloe and Digoxin heart medicine ........................................ Low potassium
- Beta-Carotene and cigarette smoking ................................ Higher cancer risk
- Beta-Carotene and drinking alcohol ................................ Higher cancer risk
- Co-Enzyme Q10 and blood-thinners ................................ Risk of bleeding
- Co-Enzyme Q10 and cancer drugs ...................................... Reduced effectiveness
- Echinacea and immunosuppressants ................................. Reduced effectiveness
- Echinacea and autoimmune disorder ................................ Worsen symptoms
- Fish oils and blood thinners ............................................. Risk of bleeding
- Fish oils and allergy to fish ............................................. Allergic reaction
- Fish oils and blood pressure meds ...................................... Low blood pressure
- Garlic pills and blood-thinners, aspirin ............................. Risk of bleeding
- Garlic pills and HIV drugs ............................................. Reduced effectiveness
- Garlic pills and birth control pills ..................................... Risk of pregnancy
- Ginseng and blood-thinners ............................................ Risk of bleeding
- Ginkgo seeds eaten ....................................................... Seizures, death
- Ginkgo and mango, poison ivy allergy .............................. Allergic reaction
- Ginkgo and diuretic blood pressure pills ......................... Higher blood pressure
- Ginkgo and anticonvulsants, psych drugs ........................ Risk of seizures
- Ginseng and blood-thinners ........................................... Risk of bleeding
- Ginseng and diuretic blood pressure meds ....................... Higher blood pressure

For more information, visit us online:
www.FloridaPoisonControl.org
If you take this combination ........... this could happen.

Glucosamine and shellfish allergy ............................................ Allergic reaction
Glucosamine and blood thinner ............................................ Risk of bleeding
Kava-kava, if you have liver problems ................................. Severe liver damage
Red Yeast Rice and Cyclosporine, statins ...................... Muscle damage
Red Yeast Rice alone ............................................................ Risk of kidney damage
Saw Palmetto and blood thinners ........................................ Risk of bleeding
St. John’s Wort and many drugs ............................... Reduced effectiveness
St. John’s Wort and surgery anesthetics ........................ Low blood pressure
St. John’s Wort and photosensitizer drugs ........................ Risk of sunburn

For questions about medications, call your pharmacist or physician.
Poison Centers can provide advice about medication problems
24 hours a day. Call 1-800-222-1222.

Grapefruit and Medication Interactions

Many drugs may not work well if you eat a grapefruit or drink grapefruit juice:

- Blood pressure drugs
- Statin drugs used to lower cholesterol
- Anti-anxiety and antihistamine medications
- Protease inhibitors, used to treat HIV/AIDS
- Some cardiac drugs or anticonvulsants
- Immunosuppressant drugs and cancer drugs

References for Interaction Information (updated November 2014):

  Truven Health Analytics, Greenwood Village, Colorado
  (Edition expires December 2014).
- Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database
  updated quarterly on Medline Plus.
  http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/herb_All.html

Reliable Scientific Information about Herbal Supplements:

- Food and Drug Administration www.fda.gov/Food/DietarySupplements