



# SCAM ALERT

## Scam: Online Health Products and Services

### Target: All Seniors

The internet is a very convenient place to compare prescription drug prices, research health products and services, and learn about ways to prepare for upcoming medical appointments and procedures, but it is not always safe.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recommends that you always speak to your doctor about any product or health service before you commit to buying it. Your doctor can tell you about the potential risks and side effects, whether or not there are studies to support the seller's claims, and the effect it will have with the medications or treatments that you are currently receiving.

**Online health products and services can be dangerous to your health!**

The FTC offers the following suggestions to help you avoid a scam:

- If you are considering buying a health related product or service online, do some research; confirm the online seller's physical address (not just a post office box) and telephone number so you know you can reach someone if needed.
- Do a search for the company name and website and be sure to look beyond the first page of results; beware of negative reviews.
- Look for safety indicators to show the site is secure, such as:
  - ▶ Links to other trustworthy sites,
  - ▶ The web address begins with https (the "s" stands for secure).
  - ▶ Security icons don't appear to be forged.
- Avoid sites that ask you to send personal or financial information by email, or ask you to wire cash through a money transfer service.
- Consider the source, when you start your search for health products, services or information, consider who is behind the information.

**If you think you may be a victim of a scam, contact  
San Bernardino County Adult Protective Services (APS) at  
877-565-2020, or your local police department.**