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## C-path To Spur Medical Innovation



Millie Martinez, KOLD News 13 Reporter

We all remember the Vioxx scare and authorities say it could happen again. However, the FDA is stepping up its efforts to improve the safety of prescription drugs and here in Tucson a research group is piloting a program to examine and detect them carefully.

In September of 2004, Vioxx was pulled off pharmacy shelves because too many patients reported heart problems.

Lisa Higgins Associate Director for C-path said, "Just because the FDA has approved a drug for sale, there can be side effects and other interactions with medications. The FDA has partnered with C-path, creating a pilot program to address pressing public health issues.

The C-path Institute was created to support the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in its effort to implement the Critical Path Initiative. It does this by creating innovative programs in education and research to enable the safe acceleration of medical product development.

Patients who have prescriptions from Basha's will be some of the first to take advantage of the program. The first two drugs C-path will monitor are FDA approved drugs Spiriva and Atrovent.

These two medications help control breathing for those suffering from asthma and emphysema.

"Once they receive their prescription; attached is a pamphlet and then they can call the Arizona Poison Center where they can sign you up for the project. This project has the potential to find problems quicker. It took Vioxx five years to get off shelves." Higgins said.

This summer C-path should know the results of Spiriva and Atrovent. Meantime, they plan to monitor other drugs in the next year or two.

For more information about C-path and it's services log onto [www.c-path.org](http://www.c-path.org)



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