

When Taking NSAIDs...



USE THE
LOWEST
EFFECTIVE
DOSE



FOR THE
SHORTEST
PERIOD OF
TIME

**ADVICE FOR YOU AND YOUR
FAMILY ABOUT TAKING**

Nonsteroidal
Anti-Inflammatory
Drugs (NSAIDs)
For Pain and/or
Inflammation



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What are NSAIDs?

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are a type of medicine commonly taken for pain relief or to reduce inflammation. Inflammation is when a part of your body is swollen, red, hot, hurting, and/or difficult to move. You may also take NSAIDs to reduce a fever.

While you may not know the word NSAID, you're probably familiar with some of the brands, like Advil®, Motrin®, or Aleve®, and some of the generics, like ibuprofen or naproxen. You should also know that some NSAIDs are available as a prescription from your health care provider, and some are available to buy "over the counter" (OTC), which means that you do not need a prescription to take them.

NSAIDs are a familiar sight in many medicine cabinets

NSAIDs are one of the most commonly prescribed medications in the United States. In 2012, people filled approximately 98 million prescriptions for NSAIDs. And, about 23 million Americans use nonprescription/OTC NSAIDs every day.^{1,2}



Alliance for Rational
Use of NSAIDs
A Public Health Coalition



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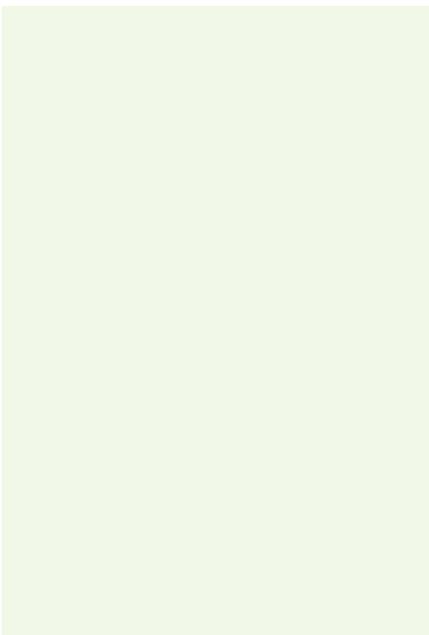


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NSAID medications provide effective pain relief

It is generally recognized that NSAIDs—both prescription and OTC—offer effective pain relief. However, like all medicine—even commonly used ones—NSAIDs can cause side effects. NSAIDs may affect your kidneys, heart, or digestive system (stomach, small intestines, colon, etc) and can lead to serious consequences.

When prescribing or recommending any medicine, health care providers will balance the potential benefits of the medicine with the potential risks. Some people will refuse to take medicine because they worry about side effects they might have. But fear of side effects should not stop you from taking NSAIDs to reduce pain to help improve your daily life. NOT treating your pain can also cause serious health issues.





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What you and your family should know



Before taking any NSAID, it is important to read the label, making sure that you know what you are taking, how to take it, and any possible side effects of taking it. Many people take NSAIDs incorrectly because they do not talk to their health care provider or their pharmacist about what they are taking.

Research has shown that:

- **Only 65%** of people report that they were warned about possible side effects of prescription NSAIDs by their health care provider²
- **Only 2%** of people who took OTC NSAIDs discussed possible digestive system side effects with their health care provider²
- **86%** of people taking both prescription and OTC pain medications did not discuss use with their pharmacist³

Also, since most NSAIDs are referred to only by their brand name or generic name, people may not be aware that they are taking an NSAID or may accidentally take more than one NSAID at a time. There are also medicines that combine an NSAID with a different type of pain medication.

If you take more than one OTC or prescription NSAID at the same time, you may increase the chances of side effects.

You can prevent these types of problems by taking charge of your own health—always ask your health care provider or pharmacist about potential side effects of any medication you are taking, including NSAIDs. Whenever you take a medication or are prescribed one, you should discuss it with your health care provider in order to make the best decisions about your health and the health of your family.





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There is guidance for the appropriate use of NSAIDs

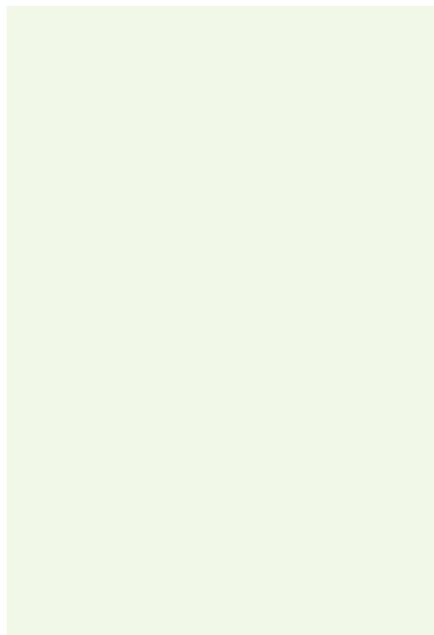
Experience and studies have shown that the amount of NSAIDs you take and the length of time you take them increase the risk of side effects. So, to guide appropriate use, the US Food and Drug Administration and the medical community strongly recommend that:



When taking NSAIDs, you should take the lowest amount that works for you for the shortest time required for relief.

Your health care providers, including your pharmacist, can help you determine the right dose and the right length of time to take NSAIDs. Some people—for example, those with chronic (long term) pain—may need to take NSAIDs for a longer period of time.

You can find more information on the appropriate use of NSAIDs by visiting www.NSAIDAlliance.com.



References

1. IMS 2012.
2. Wilcox CM, Cryer B, Triadafilopoulos G. Patterns of use and public perception of over-the-counter pain relievers: focus on nonsteroidal antiinflammatory drugs. *J Rheumatol.* 2005;32:2218-2224.
3. LaCivita C, Funkhouser E, Miller MJ, et al. Patient-reported communications with pharmacy staff at community pharmacies: the Alabama NSAID Patient Safety Study, 2005-2007. *J Am Pharm Assoc.* 2009;49:e110-e117.



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For more information, contact the Alliance for Rational Use of NSAIDs

The Alliance for Rational Use of NSAIDs is a public health coalition dedicated to the safe and appropriate use of NSAIDs. Our mission is to inform and educate patients and the public at-large on the safe and appropriate use of NSAID therapy and to balance benefits and risks when taking NSAIDs.

Our membership includes:

- American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
- American Academy of Physician Assistants
- American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
- American Chronic Pain Association
- HealthyWomen
- Jefferson School of Population Health
- National Council on Patient Information and Education
- National Kidney Foundation
- Western Pain Society

For more information on the
Alliance for Rational Use of
NSAIDs, please visit

www.NSAIDAlliance.com.

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