

Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs): Care Instructions



Your Care Instructions

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) relieve pain and fever. You also can use them to reduce swelling and inflammation.

Over-the-counter NSAIDs include:

- Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin).
- Naproxen (Aleve).

Aspirin (Bayer, Bufferin) is also an NSAID. But it doesn't work the same way as these other NSAIDs.

Prescription NSAIDs include:

- Diclofenac (Voltaren).
- Indomethacin (Indocin).
- Piroxicam (Feldene).

Take NSAIDs exactly as prescribed. Call your doctor if you think you are having a problem with your medicine. If you are taking over-the-counter medicine, read and follow all instructions on the label.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

What should you know about NSAIDs?

- Do not use an over-the-counter NSAID for longer than 10 days. Talk to your doctor first.
- The most common side effects from NSAIDs are stomachaches, heartburn, and nausea. NSAIDs may irritate the stomach lining. If the medicine upsets your stomach, you can try taking it with food. But if that doesn't help, talk with your doctor to make sure it's not a more serious problem, such as a stomach ulcer or bleeding in the stomach or intestines.
- Using NSAIDs may:
 - Lead to high blood pressure.
 - Make symptoms of heart failure worse.

- Raise the risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney damage, and skin reactions.
- Your risks are greater if you take NSAIDs at higher doses or for longer than the label says. People who are older than 65 or who have heart, stomach, or intestinal disease have a higher risk for problems.

Aspirin

Aspirin is not like other NSAIDs. It can help people who are at high risk for heart attack or stroke. But taking aspirin isn't right for everyone, because it can cause serious bleeding.

Talk to your doctor before you start taking aspirin every day. You and your doctor can decide if aspirin is a good choice for you based on your risk of a heart attack or stroke and your risk of serious bleeding. Unless you have a high risk of a heart attack or stroke, the benefits of aspirin probably won't outweigh the risk of bleeding.

- If you use other NSAIDs a lot, aspirin may not work as well to prevent heart attack and stroke.
- If you take aspirin every day for your heart, talk with your doctor before you take other NSAIDs.
- Do not give aspirin to anyone younger than 20. It has been linked to Reye syndrome, a serious illness.

When should you call for help?

Call anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You passed out (lost consciousness).
- You vomit blood or what looks like coffee grounds.
- You pass maroon or very bloody stools.

Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- Your stools are black and tarlike or have streaks of blood.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if you have any problems.

Care instructions adapted under license by Next Journey Orthopaedics, PLLC. This care instruction is for use with your licensed healthcare professional. If you have questions about a medical condition or this instruction, always ask your healthcare professional. Healthwise, Incorporated disclaims any warranty or liability for your use of this information.