







Do your health conditions affect your OTC pain reliever choice?


If you have certain health conditions, such as heart disease, liver disease, or asthma, some over-the-counter (OTC) pain relievers may be more appropriate for you than others.

Health Conditions	Acetaminophen <i>for example</i> Tylenol®	NSAIDs (Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs)		
		Ibuprofen <i>for example</i> Motrin® IB, Advil®	Naproxen Sodium <i>for example</i> Aleve®	Aspirin <i>for example</i> Bayer® Extra Strength
 High blood pressure, heart disease, or have had a stroke	The American Heart Association identifies acetaminophen as a pain relief option to try first for patients with, or at high risk for, heart disease*	Ask your healthcare professional before use. If you have high blood pressure, heart disease, or have had a stroke, ibuprofen and naproxen sodium may further increase these risks. If you take aspirin to help protect against heart attack or stroke, taking ibuprofen may decrease that heart health benefit		
 History of stomach bleeding, stomach ulcers, or heartburn	Acetaminophen may be a more appropriate choice of pain reliever, as it does not irritate the stomach the way naproxen sodium or even ibuprofen can	Ask your healthcare professional before use. If you have had stomach ulcers or bleeding problems, or consume 3 or more alcoholic drinks per day, the chance of stomach bleeding is higher if you take an NSAID such as ibuprofen, naproxen sodium, or aspirin		
 Asthma	Acetaminophen may be a more appropriate choice of pain reliever for many people with asthma	Ask your healthcare professional before use. If you have asthma that is sensitive to NSAIDs, taking an NSAID such as ibuprofen, naproxen sodium, or aspirin could make your asthma worse		
 Kidney disease	If you have kidney disease , the National Kidney Foundation identifies acetaminophen as an OTC pain reliever of choice for occasional use	Ask your healthcare professional before use. If you have kidney disease, taking an NSAID may lead to reduced kidney function		
 Liver disease or liver cirrhosis	Ask your healthcare professional before use if you have liver disease. Severe liver damage may occur if you take more than 4,000 mg of acetaminophen in 24 hours, take with other drugs that contain acetaminophen, or have 3 or more alcoholic drinks every day while using acetaminophen.	Ask your healthcare professional before use if you have liver cirrhosis. Taking an NSAID such as ibuprofen, naproxen sodium, or aspirin can increase your risk of further liver damage, reduced kidney function, and stomach bleeding		
 Age 60 or older	If you are age 60 or older , acetaminophen may be a more appropriate pain reliever choice, depending on your health history and other medications	Ask your healthcare professional before use. If you are age 60 or older, taking an NSAID such as ibuprofen, naproxen sodium, or aspirin could increase the chance of stomach bleeding		

Talk to your healthcare professional about any OTC and prescription medicines you are taking, as well as vitamins and herbal supplements, to make sure they don't interact with each other.

*When symptoms are not controlled without medicine

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See back for acetaminophen and NSAID definitions and questions for your healthcare professional 

Get Relief Responsibly®

Know the 2 main types of OTC pain relievers. Which is right for you?

Acetaminophen and NSAIDs may work differently in your body if you have certain health conditions or take other medicines. Understanding these differences could matter to your health.

What is acetaminophen? (ah-SEE-tah-MIN-ah-fen)

Acetaminophen is a pain reliever and fever reducer. It is the most common active drug ingredient in the US and is found in more than 500 over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription medicines.

How does acetaminophen work? Acetaminophen helps relieve pain by blocking pain signals within the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord).

Acetaminophen is safe and effective when used as directed.

What are NSAIDs? (EN-seds)

NSAIDs stands for **nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs**. The most well-known NSAIDs are ibuprofen, naproxen sodium, and aspirin. NSAIDs are a commonly used type of pain reliever and fever reducer found in more than 900 over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription medicines.

How do NSAIDs work? NSAIDs help relieve pain by blocking pain signals within the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) and throughout the body.

NSAIDs are safe and effective when used as directed.

To choose the type of pain reliever most appropriate for you and to take it safely, **read and follow the entire Drug Facts label** before you take any OTC medicine.

Why? The Drug Facts label contains more than directions. It includes other important information that could matter to your health.

Not sure? Ask your healthcare professional.

Your healthcare professional can consider factors like your health conditions, age, and other medicines you take to recommend an appropriate OTC pain reliever for you.

Fill out this sheet to make the most of your next visit.



My medicines and supplements	My questions about OTC pain relievers
<p>Write down all of the prescription and OTC medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements you take.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Here are some important questions you may want to ask. Write down additional questions specific to your medical history or lifestyle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which OTC pain reliever may be right for me based on my health conditions, age, or other medicines? <hr/><hr/> • Do the other medicines I am taking have the same ingredient? <hr/><hr/> • Could this pain reliever interact with my other medicines or vitamins? <hr/><hr/> • What are the possible side effects? <hr/><hr/> • What should I do if my symptoms don't go away? <hr/><hr/>

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