



NSAIDS

& Your Body

Most likely, you've taken a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) sometime in your life.

NSAIDs are a group of drugs that are used to relieve pain, reduce fevers and provide anti-inflammatory effects for swelling and redness. The most well-known, over-the-counter NSAIDs are aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) and naproxen sodium (Aleve). Most people use them to treat headaches, muscle aches, cramps, joint pain or aches from a cold.

NSAIDs are easily available, so many people don't consider them serious medications like their prescription counterparts. However, these drugs can still have serious side effects, such as:

1 HEART HEALTH

Taking NSAIDs may increase your risk of heart attack or stroke. A study found that taking high doses of NSAIDs daily can raise your cardiovascular risk by as much as a third.

2 KIDNEY HEALTH

Even short-term use of NSAIDs can harm your kidneys. If you have preexisting kidney disease and take NSAIDs regularly, it's important to talk to your doctor about monitoring kidney function.

3 DIGESTION

Short-term NSAID use can cause gastrointestinal distress, like stomach pain or nausea. Long-term use at high doses can cause peptic ulcer disease and stomach bleeding.

To avoid an overdose or an increase in side effects, follow these tips when taking NSAIDs:

WATCH YOUR DOSAGE

Take the lowest effective dose for the shortest amount of time required for relief. Talk with your health care provider before using over-the-counter NSAIDs for more than 10 days for pain.

READ LABELS CAREFULLY

Make sure you know what you are taking. Many medications contain NSAIDs, so look at the active ingredients listed on labels and know what's in every medication you are taking, whether prescription or over-the-counter, to avoid taking excessive doses of NSAIDs.

KNOW THE RISKS

Be aware of any risk factors that could increase your chance of side effects when taking NSAIDs, such as some preexisting conditions like kidney disease. Talk to your health care provider before taking a new medication. This will help you understand any risks and make the best decisions about your health.

To find out more about NSAIDs, visit www.nsaidalliance.com.