

PHARMACY

Drug Information

Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)



What are Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)?

- NSAIDs are used to relieve mild to moderate pain and swelling. Some NSAIDs, like ibuprofen, can also reduce fever.
- NSAIDs are used in the treatment of certain rheumatic and arthritic diseases or gout. However, they can only help to reduce pain, swelling and tenderness. They cannot stop or reverse the disease process.
- NSAIDs can cause different desired effects and side effects in different people. Therefore, if you do not respond favourably to one NSAID, your doctor may prescribe another NSAID instead.
- Medications in this class include:
 - Older generation NSAIDs: Aspirin, Diclofenac, Ibuprofen, Indomethacin, Ketoprofen, Ketorolac, Mefenamic Acid and Naproxen
 - Newer generation NSAIDs: Celecoxib, Etoricoxib, Parecoxib and Meloxicam

How are NSAIDs Administered / Taken?

- Your doctor may prescribe NSAIDs to be taken only if there is pain or swelling. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure about how long or how frequently you need to take the medication.
- Take NSAID medications **AFTER** food and with a full glass of water to prevent gastric irritation. Do not crush or chew enteric-coated or modified-release formulations (look at the medication label).
- If you miss a dose, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose. Never take a double dosage to make up for the missed dose.

Can NSAIDs be Administered / Taken with Other Medications?

- NSAIDs can interact with other drugs. It is therefore important for you to inform your doctor, dentist or pharmacist if you are using other oral or topical medications, including traditional remedies (some may contain NSAIDs as an ingredient). Taking two or more NSAIDs together on a regular basis may increase the chances of unwanted side effects.

What are the Important Side Effects of NSAIDs?

- While medications prescribed by your doctor should be beneficial for your condition, they may result in some side effects.
- It is important that you recognise the side effects of your medication(s) and know how to manage them.

Side Effect	Warning Signs	Management
Gastrointestinal irritation or injury <i>(more common with older generation NSAIDs when taken orally or when given as injections)</i>	Nausea, vomiting, heartburn, diarrhoea Bloody or black, tarry stools, vomiting of blood or 'coffee-ground-like' material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take with or after food to minimise gastric side effects • Take with gastro-protective medication if prescribed by your doctor or dentist • If symptoms do not improve, seek medical help
Allergy or intolerance <i>(uncommon)</i>	Rashes or hives Swelling of face, lips, tongue, eyelids and throat Difficulty breathing Fast and irregular heartbeat Fever and chills In severe cases, loss of consciousness may occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek medical help immediately if any of these symptoms occur

Kidney injury <i>(especially with high doses or prolonged use)</i> <i>(uncommon)</i>	Reduced urine volume, blood in urine, breathlessness, swelling particularly of the legs, sudden weight gain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not exceed the dose or duration prescribed by your doctor or dentist • Your doctor will monitor your treatment more closely if prolonged NSAID use is required • Seek medical help immediately if any of these symptoms occur
Giddiness, Headache <i>(uncommon)</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor

Are There any Special Precautions That I Need to Take?

- Inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while taking this class of medication.
- Inform your doctor if you have a history of asthma, gastritis or stomach ulcers, high blood pressure or any blood or organ disorders (e.g. kidney disorder or heart failure). NSAIDs may aggravate these pre-existing medical conditions so your doctor will need to monitor your treatment more closely.
- Avoid alcohol while on NSAIDs because this can increase the likelihood of stomach problems.
- There are many types and forms of NSAIDs available (tablets, capsules, syrups, suppositories, topical creams or patches, injections). Although some of these can be purchased from pharmacies without a prescription (e.g. Aspirin, Ibuprofen), self-medicating with NSAIDs is **not** advisable unless you consult a doctor or pharmacist.

How do I Store NSAIDs?

- Store your medication in a cool, dry place away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.
- Keep suppositories in the refrigerator.

If you have any questions regarding your treatment, please contact your doctor, dentist or pharmacist.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.



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