



Anti-inflammatories

Their Side-Effects Could Be More Serious Than You Think

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You're in pain. It could be low back pain, a headache, a fall, sports injury, car accident or even your arthritis. And you do what millions of Canadians and Americans do every day. You reach for a pill. You're looking for the quick fix and what's wrong with just a pill or two, especially if it's going to make you feel better? After all, if millions are doing it and they're all approved by the FDA and Health Canada, what could possibly go wrong? The truth? The truth is that plenty could go wrong. And not just to the rare person but to thousands. Let's look at the facts, but first a little background.

3 Types of Drugs - Drugs for pain basically fall into 3 different categories: pain killers, muscle relaxants and anti-inflammatories.

- **Pain killers** – These include common over the counter drugs such as Tylenol. Why am I generally anti-Tylenol? Because it does absolutely nothing to fix the underlying cause of the problem and simply masks the pain. Why is masking the pain a problem? Because pain is your body's warning system that something is wrong and by masking the pain not only are you short-circuiting this system, you may actually go out and aggravate your condition even more. Not to be blunt, but no one ever died from pain. Furthermore, they do have their side-effects, especially so in children as much as we feel the need to do something for our kids. I only recommend pain killers in cases where they would allow for sleep which is necessary for proper recovery and health.
- **Muscle relaxants** – As much as I don't like pain killers, I like muscle relaxants such as Robaxacet even less. Again, think **underlying cause**. People want quick fixes and think symptoms. In most cases the muscle is not the underlying cause but rather has reacted to the irritated nerve or dysfunctional joint. This is especially true in seriously impinged nerves that result in an antalgic posture where the body's self-defense mechanism is literally pulling you off to one side off the nerve. Why would you want to try to defeat the body's self-defense mechanism and put pressure right back on the nerve?
- **Anti-inflammatories** – This is the one type of drug that makes sense as we do want to bring down inflammation as quickly as possible. Inflammation after an injury is one of the rare times when the body's innate wisdom messes up. It treats injury the same way it does infection and long term inflammation is actually adverse to our health. This is why we should ice an injury immediately. Anti-inflammatories include over the counter drugs such as Advil, Ibuprofen and Motrin as well as prescription drugs such as Naprosyn, Voltaren, Arthrotec and Celebrex. So what's the problem with anti-inflammatories? There are many.

The Side-Effects of Anti-inflammatories

While you may believe that drugs are “safe” because they’ve been approved by Health Canada or the FDA, you’d have to be living under a rock not to be aware of the multiple drug recalls from supposedly “safe and approved” drugs. It is fairly common knowledge that anti-inflammatories can be tough on your stomach but do you know to what extent? Last year, 76,000 people went to hospital emergency rooms in the U.S. due to the “side-effects” of anti-inflammatories, many suffering from serious stomach bleeding and even death. Last year in Canada alone, 1900 Canadians **died** from anti-inflammatory use.

The New Death Rate

Think it can’t happen to you? We all know that studies can contradict one another. However, a few years ago, 2 scientists looked at every study that had ever been completed on the “chronic” use of anti-inflammatories and came up with a new **death rate**. How did they define “chronic”? Chronic was defined as anyone who had been using anti-inflammatories for 2 months or longer. This would include anyone with chronic headaches, arthritis, menstrual problems, chronic injuries and so much more. Please note that anti-inflammatories were only ever meant to be used in the short term meaning 2 weeks or less. If you still have inflammation 2 months later, obviously you’re not correcting the underlying cause of the problem.

So what was the death rate? What are your chances of dying from taking anti-inflammatories for 2 months or longer? Is it one in a million? One in a hundred thousand? The new death rate is **1 in 1,200**. (This is not a misprint.)

The Natural Alternative

Aside from using ice (please see my article “Ice or Heat – Applying Common Sense to your Injury”), there are many natural alternatives that are not only effective but extremely safe. My highest recommendation goes to Core Science’s Acute Injury Plus. Based on the latest science and research, not only is it highly effective and of unparalleled quality, but it even has components which double as a digestive aid, hence, instead of harming the stomach, it actually benefits the stomach. For best results it should be taken immediately after discovering the inflammation and continued until the inflammation is gone while also addressing the underlying cause of the injury.

Your Best Approach

Your best chance for quickly and safely recovering from an injury can be accomplished by addressing the underlying cause of your problem, limiting drug use to avoid not only their serious side-effects but also lessen the risk of further injury by masking the problem, utilizing ice and taking natural anti-inflammatories. As always, you should consult your own qualified health professional.

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