



Mixing Pain Medicines Is Risky For The Stomach

(NAPSA)—Many people as they age take aspirin to help prevent heart attack and stroke. But a recent study found that mixing pain medicines may be risky. It showed that taking aspirin with common pain relievers may harm the stomach. These include Advil® (ibuprofen) and Aleve® (naproxen).

This study looked at health records of close to 50,000 people with pain. These people took over-the-counter (OTC) ibuprofen and naproxen. These drugs are called non-specific nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (ns-NSAIDs). The study found that taking aspirin with (OTC) naproxen harms the stomach. The risk of stomach bleeding and ulcers doubled compared to naproxen alone. For ibuprofen, the risk tripled.

“Aspirin raises the risk for stomach problems,” said Dr. Joseph Biskupiak. He led the study and is from the University of Utah College of Pharmacy. OTC drugs should be taken as directed. “While you can buy them in your drug store, it doesn’t mean there’s no risk.”

The study also showed the harm from use of these ns-NSAIDs alone. The NSAIDs reviewed raised the risk of stomach problems by themselves. Harm to the stomach from ns-NSAIDs has been known for a while. In fact, each year ns-NSAIDs put more than 100,000 people in the hospital for stomach problems. And they’ve caused the deaths of thousands.



About 31 million adults in the U.S. take over-the-counter (OTC) drugs for pain daily.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration asked makers of these drugs to add stronger warnings of serious stomach problems to their labels. The drug makers were also asked to update their labels to include serious skin reactions. They must also explain the potential risk to the heart. All OTC NSAID labels state not to take them for more than 10 days without talking to a doctor.

“Most people don’t know that OTCs are serious medicines. They have benefits, but they may have risks too,” said Biskupiak.

“I urge people to read the labels of OTC pain drugs. They must take these drugs the right way. Also, they should think twice before taking them with aspirin. People who need pain relief should talk with their doctors about which pain medicine might be right for them.”

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Note to Editors: Support for the study was provided by Pfizer Inc.