

Drug-Drug Interactions of Common OTC Drugs:

Pain Relievers, Antihistamines, Decongestants and Cough Medicines

Pain Relievers

OTC Drug	Prescription Drug	Adverse Effect
Acetaminophen (brand name: Tylenol)	Antibiotics rifampin (brand names: Rifadin, Rimactane) and isoniazid (INH)	Gets in the way of how the liver processes acetaminophen and increases the risk of liver problems when taking acetaminophen.
Aspirin (two brand names: Bayer, St. Joseph)	Diabetes medicines such as chlorpropamide (brand name: Diabinese), insulin and others	Aspirin increases the blood-sugar-lowering effects of diabetes medicines.
	Anti-seizure drugs such as phenytoin (brand name: Dilantin) and valproic acid (brand name: Depakene)	Aspirin gets in the way of the anti-seizure drugs binding with proteins in the blood and leads to increased anti-seizure drug levels in your blood.
NSAIDs, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspirin • Ibuprofen (two brand names: Advil, Motrin) • Ketoprofen (brand name: Orudis KT) • Naproxen (one brand name: Aleve) 	Anti-cancer drug methotrexate (one brand name: Trexall)	NSAIDs reduce how the kidneys clear methotrexate out of the body. This can lead to having too much methotrexate in your blood.
	Drugs to suppress the immune system, such as cyclosporine (brand names: Neoral, Sandimmune)	NSAIDs reduce how the kidneys clear the immune system or heart drugs out of the body. This can lead to having too much of the drugs in your blood.
	Heart medicines such as digoxin	NSAIDs reduce the blood-pressure-lowering effects of the blood pressure drugs.
	Blood pressure drugs, such as propranolol (brand names: Inderal, Innopran XL), metoprolol (brand names: Lopressor, Toprol-XL) and atenolol (brand name: Tenormin)	NSAIDs decrease effectiveness of diuretics.
Diuretics	NSAIDs decrease effectiveness of diuretics.	
Acetaminophen NSAIDs	Blood thinners such as warfarin (brand name: Coumadin)	Acetaminophen and NSAIDs increase blood-thinning effect of blood thinners.
Ibuprofen Naproxen sodium	Lithium	Ibuprofen and Naproxen reduce how the kidneys clear lithium out of the body. This

		can lead to having too much lithium in your blood.
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Antihistamines		
OTC Drug	Prescription Drug	Adverse Effect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brompheniramine (some brand names: Dimetapp Cold & Allergy Elixir, Robitussin Allergy & Cough Liquid) • Chlorpheniramine (one brand name: Robitussin Flu Liquid) • • Dimenhydrinate (brand name: Dramamine Original) • Diphenhydramine (some brand names: Benadryl Allergy, Nytol, Sominex) • Doxylamine (two brand names: Vicks NyQuil, Alka-Seltzer Plus Night-Time Cold Medicine) 	<p>Sleeping pills, sedatives, muscle relaxants, anti-anxiety drugs, including alprazolam (brand name: Xanax), diazepam, lorazepam (brand name: Ativan), temazepam (brand name: Restoril) and others</p>	<p>These antihistamines increase the depressant effects (for example, sleepiness) of sleeping pills, sedatives, muscle relaxants or anti-anxiety drugs on the central nervous system (brain).</p>
Decongestants		
OTC Drug	Prescription Drug	Adverse Effect
<p>Pseudoephedrine (some brand names: Contac Non-Drowsy, Efidac 24, Sudafed)</p>	<p>Monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs),* including isocarboxazid (brand name: Marplan), phenelzine (brand name: Nardil), selegiline (one brand name: Eldepryl) and tranylcypromine (brand name: Parnate)</p>	<p>Pseudoephedrine can cause dangerous increases in blood pressure and heart rhythm problems when taken with MAOIs.</p>
	<p>High blood pressure drugs</p>	<p>Pseudoephedrine reduces the blood-pressure-lowering effects of high blood pressure drugs.</p>
	<p>Stimulants, such as diet pills</p>	<p>Pseudoephedrine can increase the side effects of stimulants on the central nervous system (brain), such as anxiety.</p>
Cough Medicines		
OTC Drug	Prescription Drug	Adverse Effect
<p>Dextromethorphan (some brand names: Delsym, Robitussin Maximum Strength, Vicks 44 Cough Relief)</p>	<p>MAOIs*</p>	<p>Dextromethorphan, when taken with MAOIs, can cause "serotonin syndrome" with symptoms such as agitation, high body temperature, sweating, rapid heart rate, and trouble moving.</p>
	<p>Sedatives or tranquilizers</p>	<p>Dextromethorphan increases the sedative effects of the sedatives or tranquilizers.</p>
<p>*-- Note that pseudoephedrine and dextromethorphan may cause serious drug-drug interactions and should never be taken while you are taking an MAOI or within 2 weeks of taking one.</p>		