

OTC aspirin: Temporary pain and fever relief

Aspirin is an internal analgesic and is used for temporary fever and pain relief. It also is part of the class of drugs called nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, or NSAIDs. Aspirin can be found in both over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription medicines. (On some prescription labels, it may be abbreviated as ASA and spelled out as acetylsalicylic acid. It will never be abbreviated on an OTC Drug Facts label, and will be listed as aspirin.) It is a safe and effective medicine and is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Here is some information that might help you safely use aspirin.

<i>Tips for safe use:</i>	<i>Ask a healthcare professional before using if:</i>	<i>Stop use and contact a doctor if:</i>	<i>Do not use:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and follow the label directions. • Do not take more medicine or for a longer period of time than the label instructs unless your doctor has told you to. • Aspirin can be found in single-ingredient medicines as well as combination products for adults for cold or flu symptoms or pain. • Check with a healthcare professional before using more than one internal analgesic product at the same time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You drink three or more alcohol drinks a day. • You experience stomach problems that last or come back, such as heartburn, upset stomach, or stomach pain; ulcers; or bleeding problems. • You are taking a prescription blood thinner or a prescription gout, diabetes, or arthritis medication. • You have asthma. • You are pregnant or breastfeeding. (Women in the last three months of pregnancy are specifically told not to use aspirin without a doctor's permission.) • You are taking another NSAID (aspirin, ibuprofen, ketoprofen, or naproxen sodium). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever gets worse or lasts more than three days, pain gets worse or lasts more than 10 days, redness or swelling is present, new symptoms occur, or you hear ringing in your ears or start losing your hearing. • You have signs of stomach bleeding, such as feeling faint, vomiting blood, bloody or black stools, or stomach pain that does not get better. • An allergic reaction occurs, such as hives, facial swelling, asthma (wheezing), or shock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are allergic to aspirin or any other pain reliever or fever reducer. • For children or teenagers with chicken pox or flu symptoms due to a rare illness (Reye's syndrome) reported to be associated with aspirin. • If you're a woman in the last three months of pregnancy unless specifically told to do so by a doctor due to problems in the unborn child or complications during delivery. • If tamper-prevention features—such as seals, locks, and films—are not clear or seem broken.

As always, if you have any questions about any medicine you are taking or if you have any unexpected side effects, talk to a healthcare professional. And keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.

