


Beware: These meds might make you feel worse!

This article originally appeared on Dr. Teitelbaum's website, Vitality101.

In recent installments of my “Ten-Point Tune-Up” series, I discussed the importance of eliminating unnecessary medications, and why that’s usually a must for increasing energy, health – and longevity (side effects from prescription drugs kill more than 100,000 people every year!). It turns out my discussions were timely, because a number of troubling revelations about medications have just surfaced in recently published research. Chief among these are:

-  You’ll be pain free, because you’ll be dead. Taking opioids for chronic, non-cancer pain increases your risk of death by 72%, according to a recent study in the journal *Pain* – such a shame, because there are so many better, safer ways to relieve chronic pain![1] Yet another recent study shows that overdoses from prescription opioids account for nearly 70% of all emergency room visits![2]
- Taking “smart drugs” is stupid. One in five students takes “smart drugs” like Provigil to boost their ability to study. But a new study shows that the drug actually impairs mental ability in creative, healthy people.[3]
- Just about everybody who has had a heart attack is prescribed a beta-blocker – but few need them. If you’ve had a heart attack, a prescription for a heart-slowing beta-blocker is nearly automatic. But when researchers analyzed health data from more than 100,000 patients, they found the drugs offered no additional protection from death. But they did significantly increase the risk for heart failure![4]
- New blood thinner makes you bleed more. The new blood-thinner Pradaxa was approved in 2010 as an alternative to warfarin, the old standard. But a new study shows that, compared to warfarin, folks on Pradaxa are 58% more likely to have a “major bleed” (brain or gut bleeding that sends you to the hospital) and 27% are more likely to have a “minor bleed” (gut bleeding that was treated on an outpatient basis, or a nose bleed).[5]

The moral of these stories: *Question or minimize the use of medications when possible, and favor natural remedies* (though never stop any drug without the supervision and approval of your physician, as sometimes they may be essential). In this article, I’ll focus on a few classes of medications that are both very popular and potentially very dangerous: drugs for heartburn, osteoporosis or pain-relief from arthritis. As you’ll see, there are effective natural remedies for each of those health problems.

This Friday, my radio show will also discuss the problems with medications, and some key situations in which you should consider safer and more effective natural options. I invite you to tune in (visit “The Cutting Edge of Health and Wellness Today”)!

It’s time to declare your freedom from unnecessary meds and start enjoying vibrant health!

These Drugs Can Make You Feel Worse!

Heartburn Drugs

Forty million Americans have regular bouts of heartburn, and we spend \$14 billion yearly to prevent and stop the pain. But the OTC and prescription drugs most people take for heartburn – proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) like Nexium and Prevacid – have many possible side effects. By squelching the production of stomach acid, they can also:

- Double your risk of vitamin B12 deficiency.
- Double the risk of colds and flu, and increase the risk of pneumonia.
- Triple the risk of hospital-acquired infection with *C. difficile*.
- If you have heart disease, increase your risk of dying from a heart attack.

Plus, they're addictive. When you stop taking them, your heartburn gets worse, forcing you back on the drug.

It's fine to take a PPI a few times a month, but regular use is a big mistake. Try a chewable antacid instead, picking a brand that includes magnesium. (Calcium supplements have been linked to a 31% higher risk of heart attack, so it's best to avoid calcium-only antacids like Tums.) There are also many natural ways to beat heartburn. Try them for a month or two, and see if you can stop taking PPIs. Four excellent remedies are:

- Take plant-based digestive enzymes. Low levels of enzymes in processed foods are a common cause of heartburn.
- Sip warm liquid while eating.
- Chew (or take) mastic gum (one to two 500 mg capsules, twice a day, for two months).
- Take deglycyrrhizinated (DGL) licorice (I recommend **Advanced DGL**, by Europharma).

Osteoporosis Drugs

52 million Americans have either osteopenia or osteoporosis – thin, weakened bones, either from outright disease (osteoporosis) or a pre-disease stage (osteopenia). Yearly, millions of people with weakened bones take a billion dollars' worth of prescription drugs (Boniva, Actonel and others) to prevent bone fractures. But osteoporosis drugs work by hardening existing bone, not creating new bone. And studies now show that long-term use can actually decrease new bone formation, causing spontaneous, serious fractures.

A better approach is to take the product **OsteoStrong** (by EuroPharma), adding 340 to 680 milligrams of **strontium** daily. I consider OsteoStrong one of the best bone health protecting products on the market (natural or prescription) because it contains calcium, magnesium, high-dose vitamin D, vitamin K, boron, silica and other crucial yet oft-ignored bone-building nutrients. Add strontium to this, but taken at a different time of day. Strontium is one the most effective bone-building nutrients available, with studies showing it improves bone density by 15% and decreases the incidence of first-time fractures in women with osteoporosis.

NSAIDs (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs)

There are more than 20 NSAIDs and over 100 NSAID-containing products. Some of the most common are aspirin, Motrin, Advil and Celebrex. Thirteen million Americans take these drugs regularly, usually to relieve arthritis pain – and one in three suffer digestive side effects. Unfortunately, for some people the “side effect” is terminal: a sudden, massive, and deadly bleeding ulcer. NSAIDs can also boost blood pressure, doubling your risk of heart attack or stroke. Good natural choices to relieve arthritis pain include:

- Use glucosamine sulfate to repair bones (750 mg, two times a day).
- Try a wonderful pain-relieving topical cream called **TraumaPlant (comfrey cream)**. You’ll LOVE it!
- To settle immune overreactivity, try **Curamin** from Europharma, an herbal supplement that includes curcumin, boswellia, DLPA and nattokinase. Simply put, it is a pain-relief miracle!
- Also use fish oil. I recommend **Vectomega**, one to two tablets daily.
- Regular exercise like walking or swimming can decrease arthritis pain (exercising in a warm pool is ideal). Important: never try to “push through” significant pain.
- Using a heating pad or moist heat for 20 minutes is a great way to soothe pain. After 5 to 10 minutes, slowly and gently move the joints, gradually reclaiming your full range of motion.

References

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