

[IMAGE]

Protect Your Heart: Avoid the Anti-Inflammatories

By Editorial Staff

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) and naproxen (Aleve, etc.) are among the most widely used pain-relieving medications in the world. That's a big problem when you consider the results of a decade-long study that assessed the impact of NSAID use on heart failure risk.

The study, which analyzed NSAID use and heart failure in more than 100,000 heart failure patients and 8.2 million healthy individuals with no history of heart failure, found that nine NSAIDs elevated the risk of heart failure, even in the healthy control population. Included in the nine were ibuprofen and naproxen.

Now here's the really interesting part of the study: It didn't include over-the-counter NSAID use (which is presumably significantly harder to track). Does that mean you're safe if you don't take prescription NSAIDs, but load up on the OTC variety? According to the authors:

heart - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark "Our findings, which focused only on prescription NSAIDs, might apply to NSAIDs obtained over the counter as well. Although over-the-counter NSAIDs are probably typically used at lower doses, by younger people, and for shorter durations than prescribed NSAIDs, they are sometimes available at the same doses than those prescribed and may be inappropriately overused. Therefore, our findings could have large scale consequences in public health and further research needs to assess the safety of over-the-counter NSAIDs under the conditions they are typically used."

So, what's your heart worth to you? If you turn to the medicine cabinet or local drug-store shelf for a NSAID at the first sign of pain, you could be putting your heart at risk. Talk to your doctor about nondrug options for managing pain stemming from common conditions such as muscle soreness, back and neck pain, headaches, and more – and try natural, drug-free alternatives to medication, including chiropractic care.

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