

[IMAGE]

Less Pain, Less Empathy: A Risk You're Willing to Take?

By Editorial Staff

Pain, both chronic and acute, can be a life changer, but what are you willing to risk in order to achieve pain relief? If you're taking acetaminophen-containing pain-relievers (Tylenol, etc.), you might feel less pain – but the trade-off may be less empathy, according to a recent study.

In a CNN.com article discussing the study findings, study co-author Baldwin Way, assistant professor of psychology and member of the Ohio State Wexner Medical Center's Institute for Behavioral Medicine Research (which conducted the study), put the research results in easily understandable (and somewhat disconcerting) language:

"If you are having an argument with your spouse and you just took acetaminophen, this research suggests you might be less understanding of what you did to hurt your spouse's feelings," he said.

If you think it's easy to avoid acetaminophen, keep in mind that it's an ingredient in not only Tylenol, but also approximately 600 other over-the-counter and prescription medications. Discuss the potential side effects of acetaminophen and any medication they prescribe or recommend before you take it. In the case of acetaminophen, you *and* the people you know and love (the ones we hope you usually feel empathy for) deserve it.

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