

[IMAGE]

Warning: Acetaminophen May Cause Respiratory Problems

Acetaminophen is a common pain reliever found in many popular over-the-counter drugs, including Tylenol, Anacin-3, and many popular children's cold and flu medications. Previous studies have shown a correlation between acetaminophen intake and an increase in asthma and other respiratory illnesses. Researchers investigated the relationship between analgesic use (i.e., acetaminophen, aspirin, ibuprofen) and the prevalence of asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and lung functioning in adults, via a cross-sectional analysis.

Study participants were divided into categories based on their self-reported smoking history, classified as never smokers, ex-smokers and current smokers; lifetime cigarette consumption was quantified in pack-years. Then, participants were classified based on their analgesic use as never users; occasional users (1-5 times in the past month); regular users (6-29 times in the past month); and daily users (more than 29 times in the past month).

Results: Among the participants, 6.9% had asthma, 11.8% had COPD, and 2.8% had both diseases. Ultimately, researchers concluded that the "study results are consistent with previous research demonstrating a positive association between acetaminophen use and prevalence of asthma. We also investigated the relation of acetaminophen with the prevalence of COPD and found a significant dose-response relation, which was of about the same magnitude as the association for asthma. Increased use of acetaminophen also was associated with decreased lung function, although this effect was seen only in participants reporting daily (or greater) use of acetaminophen."

If nothing else, this study should serve as a warning to limit your use of acetaminophen and other over-the-counter analgesics containing acetaminophen. If you currently take analgesics for pain relief, remember that regular chiropractic is a noninvasive, healthy alternative to drugs.

For more information on general health, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/general.

Reference:

McKeever TM, Lewis SA, Smit HA, et al. The association of acetaminophen, aspirin, and ibuprofen with respiratory disease and lung function. *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*

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