

Pain Relievers

Also called: Analgesics, Pain medicines

Pain relievers are medicines that reduce or relieve headaches, sore muscles, arthritis or any number of other aches and pains. There are many different pain medicines, and each one has advantages and risks.



Some types of pain respond better to certain medicines than others. Each person may also have a slightly different response to a pain reliever.

Over-the-counter (OTC) medicines are good for many types of pain.

There are two main types of OTC pain medications: acetaminophen (Tylenol) and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). Aspirin, naproxen (Aleve) and ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) are examples of OTC NSAIDs.

If OTC medicines don't relieve your pain, your doctor may prescribe something stronger. Many NSAIDs are available at prescription doses.

The most powerful pain relievers are narcotics. These drugs can have serious side effects. You must use them only under a doctor's supervision.

There are many things you can do to help ease pain. Pain relievers are just one part of a pain treatment plan.