

# How to Use Tylenol and Ibuprofen For Pain

*If you don't think tylenol and ibuprofen work for pain,  
you may not be taking them right!*

## Facts about acetaminophen ("a-seeta-minn-o-fen"):

- ☑ Also known as "Tylenol" (brand name); APAP for short.
- ☑ It reduces pain and fever, but can be hard on your liver if you take too much.
- ☑ APAP is found in some narcotics, like Percocet, Vicodin, and Norco. The label says: 5/325, 7.5/500, 10/650, etc. The big number is the APAP. (The little number is the narcotic.)
- ☑ It is also found in a lot of cold remedies, like Ny-Quil and Allerest. *Do not take them along with APAP!*
- ☑ If you have liver problems, like cirrhosis or hepatitis C, you need to limit the amount of APAP you use daily. Stay under 2000mg total per 24 hours.
- ☑ In studies where people do not know what drug they're taking, APAP is found to be very good for pain.

## Facts about ibuprofen ("eye-bew-pro-fen") :

- ☑ Also known as "Advil," "Motrin," (brand names); member of the family NSAID ("en-sed"), which is short for "non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug."
- ☑ It reduces pain, fever, and inflammation, but can be hard on your stomach and kidneys.
- ☑ Other NSAIDs are naproxen (Aleve), aspirin (Exedrin), and ketorolac (Toradol). *Do not take them with ibuprofen!*
- ☑ *Don't* take NSAIDs if you are pregnant, have bleeding ulcers, take blood thinners, or have kidney disease.
- ☑ It **IS** okay to keep taking one baby aspirin a day (81 mg) for your heart, while you are taking ibuprofen.
- ☑ Ibuprofen is the best, safest, and cheapest NSAID you can take.

Acetaminophen and ibuprofen **CAN** be taken together...  
They **CAN** be taken along with narcotics and muscle relaxers...  
You **DO** need to do the math, and make sure you don't overdose on them.



**To use tylenol (APAP, acetaminophen) and ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) together safely:  
Use 4000 mg or less of tylenol per 24 hours  
And 2400 mg or less of ibuprofen per 24 hours.**



### IMPORTANT:

IF YOU TAKE PAIN MEDICINE THAT ALREADY HAS ACETAMINOPHEN IN IT ("APAP"),  
you need to add up how much APAP is in it.

#### Example:

"Percocet 5/325" contains 325 mg of APAP per pill (with 5 mg oxycodone).

If you take twelve of these per day, you are almost at your daily limit for tylenol:

325 mg x 12 pills = 3900 mg = almost 4000 mg = MAXIMUM. Don't take any plain tylenol.

#### Example:

"Vicodin 5/500" contains 500 mg APAP per pill (with 5 mg hydrocodone).

If you take four "Vicodin 5/500," you are only halfway to your daily limit for tylenol:

500 mg x 4 pills = 2000 mg = 1/2 of 4000 mg.

This means *you can still take another 2000 mg of plain acetaminophen daily.*



**WARNING:** On June 30, 2009, an FDA advisory panel recommended that Percocet and Vicodin be outlawed, because they cause more than 400 tylenol-related deaths in the United States each year, from accidental overdose and liver damage.

***You can ask your doctor to give you pain medication that does NOT contain tylenol,  
and take acetaminophen separately, so you can easily control how much you are taking.***

***This is especially important if you take pain medication every day for chronic pain!***