



# Pain and Fever Relief

PATIENT EDUCATION SERIES

## Acetaminophen (Tylenol)

- ◆ **Regular strength (325mg each tablet) - 2 tabs every 4-6 hours as needed with no more than 10 tablets per day (3250 mg).**
- ◆ **Extra strength (500 mg each tablet) - 2 tabs every 6 hours as needed with no more than 6 tablets per day (3000 mg).**
- ◆ Tylenol (acetaminophen) can be used both as a fever reducer and for pain. It is easy on the stomach, so it is particularly helpful when there are symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and it does not need to be taken with food. Tylenol (acetaminophen) does not affect platelet function (blood clotting) so it is less likely to cause bleeding when used for pain after surgery, for example.
- ◆ **It is very important however not to exceed the recommended dosage of Tylenol (acetaminophen), as it can be toxic to the liver .**
- ◆ If you are taking other over-the-counter combination products which contain acetaminophen for example, (Dayquil or Nyquil) be sure to read the labels to avoid excessive dosing. Also, some prescription pain relievers may also contain Tylenol (acetaminophen); examples are Percocette, Vicodin, Tylenol with codeine.

## Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, Nuprin)

- ◆ **Over the counter strength Ibuprofen (200 mg each tablet): 2 tabs every 4-6 hours as needed with food or 3 tabs every 6 hours, with food.**
- ◆ **Prescription strength Ibuprofen: one 600 mg tablet three times daily with food OR one 800 mg. tablet three times daily with food.**
- ◆ **Maximum daily dosing of Ibuprofen is 2400 mg per day.**
- ◆ Ibuprofen is a type of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory, so it can be useful for inflammation as well as fever and pain. It may be more effective than Tylenol for muscle aches and orthopedic injuries. In order to reduce inflammation it may be necessary to use consistently for several days. Unfortunately, Ibuprofen may be more irritating to the stomach, so it should be taken with food and discontinued if stomach pain develops. It should be avoided in individuals with kidney problems. Ibuprofen can sometimes affect platelet function (blood clotting).

- ◆ Many over-the-counter combination products also contain ibuprofen (for example, Advil Cold and Sinus, or Motrin PM), so be sure you read labels to avoid an overdose.

## Alternating Ibuprofen and Tylenol

**For intense pain and high fever, both Tylenol and Ibuprofen can be taken**, as they have a different chemical composition, and may give more relief than can be provided using either alone.

### How to alternate Ibuprofen and Tylenol:

- ◆ Take two ibuprofen 200 mg tablets and then 2-3 hours later, if fever and pain is not relieved, take two regular strength Tylenol 325 mg tablets.
- ◆ Two-three hours later, if fever and/or pain persist, take two more ibuprofen tablets (200 mg each).
- ◆ You can continue to alternate Ibuprofen and Tylenol, up to the maximum doses of each medicine, but do not exceed the maximum dose of each.
- ◆ Be sure to maintain proper dosing intervals between successive doses of the same medication (at least 4 hours between doses of the same medication).

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