

CONNECT PROTECT²

Connecting with Your Physician to Reduce NSAID Risks — A Patient Discussion Guide

If you use either a prescription or over-the-counter non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like ibuprofen, on a regular basis, you may have an increased risk for gastrointestinal problems, including stomach ulcers. It's important to talk to your doctor about these risks and how you can address them.

The following guide will help you prepare for a conversation with your doctor so you can make the most out of your doctor's visit, while providing tips for what to do once you leave the office.

Preparing for the doctor's visit

- Keep track of how many NSAIDs you take on a daily and weekly basis, including prescription and over-the-counter
 - It's important to mention NSAID use to your physician, even if you're taking it over-the-counter.
 - To help address risks, your physician needs to know about both over-the-counter and prescription medications that you take.
- Note any symptoms you may be experiencing, including:
 - Indigestion
 - Abdominal pain
 - Heartburn
 - Nausea
 - For a complete list of symptoms, visit: <http://www.gastro.org/wmspage.cfm?parm1=5815>
 - Not everyone will experience symptoms, making it important to tell your doctor about the NSAIDs you are taking
- Develop a list of all prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications and supplements you are taking and have those available at every physician appointment, especially if you see multiple physicians.

At the doctor's office – questions to ask

- Is my NSAID use enough to put me at risk for stomach ulcerations?
- What are my options to address those risks?
- Should I consider using a GI protective co-therapy?
- What should I do if I'm on clopidogrel (Plavix) and/or low-dose aspirin?

Following the visit

- If you are prescribed a medication to reduce your GI risks while taking an NSAID, be sure to follow the prescription instructions provided by your physician.
- Continue to track your symptoms, especially if they worsen, and let your physician know about them.
- If you are not prescribed a medication to reduce your GI risks while taking an NSAID, you should alert your physician if you are experiencing any dyspepsia, abdominal pain, heartburn or nausea.