

Ibuprofen

Why is this medication prescribed?

Ibuprofen is a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID), which relieves pain and swelling (inflammation). It is used to treat headaches, muscle aches, backaches, dental pain, menstrual cramps, arthritis, or athletic injuries. This drug works by blocking the enzyme in your body that makes prostaglandins. Decreasing prostaglandins helps to reduce pain, swelling, and fever.

How should this medicine be used?

Take this medication by mouth with a full glass (8 ounces or 240 milliliters) of water. Do not lie down for at least 30 minutes after taking this drug. If stomach upset occurs while taking this medication, take it with food, milk, or an antacid. If repeat doses are needed, they are usually given 6 or 8 hours apart; or as directed by your doctor. When ibuprofen is used in children, the dose is based on your child's weight. In certain conditions (e.g., arthritis), it may take up to two weeks, taken regularly, before the full benefits of this drug take effect. If you are taking this drug on an "as needed" basis, remember that pain medications work best if they are used as the first signs of pain occur. If you wait until the pain has significantly worsened, the medicine may not work as well. If you use this medication for migraine headache, and the pain is not relieved or worsens after the first dose, tell your doctor immediately.

Other uses for this medicine

This medication is also used to reduce fever and to relieve minor aches and pains due to the common cold or flu.

What special precautions should I follow?

Before taking ibuprofen, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or to aspirin or other NSAIDs (e.g., naproxen, celecoxib); or if you have any other allergies. Consult your doctor or pharmacist if you have severe kidney disease, aspirin-sensitive asthma (a history of worsening breathing with runny/stuffy nose after taking aspirin or other NSAIDs), recent heart bypass surgery (CABG). medical history, especially of: kidney disease, liver disease, poorly controlled diabetes, stomach/intestine/esophagus problems (e.g., bleeding, ulcers, recurring heartburn), heart disease (e.g., congestive heart failure, history of heart attack), high blood pressure, stroke, swelling (edema, fluid retention), dehydration, blood disorders (e.g., anemia), bleeding or clotting problems, asthma, growths in the nose (nasal polyps), history of an allergic reaction with symptoms of lip/tongue/throat swelling (angioedema), any allergies in addition to those listed above. This drug may make you dizzy or drowsy; use caution engaging in activities requiring alertness such as driving or using machinery. This medicine may cause stomach bleeding.

This medication may make you more sensitive to the sun. Caution is advised when using this drug in the elderly because they may be more sensitive to the side effects of the drug, especially stomach bleeding and kidney effects. This medication should be used only when clearly needed during the first 6 months of pregnancy. It is not recommended for use during the last 3 months of pregnancy. This medication passes into breast milk.

What special dietary instructions should I follow?

Limit alcohol and stop smoking.

What should I do if I forget a dose?

If you are prescribed this drug on a regular schedule (not just "as needed") and you miss a dose, use it as soon as you remember. If it is near the time of the next dose, skip the missed dose and resume your usual dosing schedule. Do not double the dose to catch up.

What side effects can this medication cause?

Get emergency medical help if you have any of these signs of an allergic reaction: hives; difficulty breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Stop taking ibuprofen and seek medical attention or call your doctor at once if you have any of these serious side effects:

- chest pain, weakness, shortness of breath, slurred speech, problems with vision or balance;
- black, bloody, or tarry stools;
- coughing up blood or vomit that looks like coffee grounds;
- swelling or rapid weight gain;
- urinating less than usual or not at all;
- nausea, stomach pain, low fever, loss of appetite, dark urine, clay-colored stools, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes);
- fever, sore throat, and headache with a severe blistering, peeling, and red skin rash;
- bruising, severe tingling, numbness, pain, muscle weakness; or
- fever, headache, neck stiffness, chills, increased sensitivity to light, purple spots on the skin, and/or seizure (convulsions).

Keep taking ibuprofen and talk to your doctor if you have any of these less serious side effects:

- upset stomach, mild heartburn, diarrhea, constipation;
- bloating, gas;
- dizziness, headache, nervousness;
- skin itching or rash;
- blurred vision; or

- ringing in your ears.

What storage conditions are needed for this medicine?

Store at room temperature between 15-30 degrees C away from light and moisture.

In case of emergency/overdose

If overdose is suspected, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately

What other information should I know?

This medicine can increase your risk of life-threatening heart or circulation problems, including heart attack or stroke. This risk will increase the longer you use ibuprofen. Do not use this medicine just before or after having heart bypass surgery (also called coronary artery bypass graft, or CABG).

Seek emergency medical help if you have symptoms of heart or circulation problems, such as chest pain, weakness, shortness of breath, slurred speech, or problems with vision or balance.

This medicine can also increase your risk of serious effects on the stomach or intestines, including bleeding or perforation (forming of a hole). These conditions can be fatal and gastrointestinal effects can occur without warning at any time while you are taking ibuprofen. Older adults may have an even greater risk of these serious gastrointestinal side effects.

Do not take more of this medication than is recommended. An overdose of ibuprofen can cause damage to your stomach or intestines. The maximum amount of ibuprofen for adults is 800 milligrams per dose or 3200 mg per day (4 maximum doses). Use only the smallest amount of ibuprofen needed to get relief from your pain, swelling, or fever.

Avoid taking ibuprofen if you are taking aspirin to prevent stroke or heart attack. Ibuprofen can make aspirin less effective in protecting your heart and blood vessels. If you must use both medications, take the ibuprofen at least 8 hours before or 30 minutes after you take the aspirin (non-enteric coated form).