

The drugs don't work, say back pain researchers.

The George Institute for Global Health, Sydney Australia.

“Paracetamol is No Better for Low Back Pain than a Placebo.”

CONCLUSIONS:

“Paracetamol is ineffective in the treatment of low back pain and provides minimal short term benefit for people with osteoarthritis. These results support the reconsideration of recommendations to use paracetamol for patients with low back pain and osteoarthritis of the hip or knee in clinical practice guidelines.”



Machado GC et al, Efficacy and safety of paracetamol for spinal pain and osteoarthritis: systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised placebo controlled trials. *BMJ* **2015**; 350. PMID: 25828856

“Back pain medications (NSAIDs) do more harm than good.”

RESULTS:

We included 35 randomised placebo-controlled trials. NSAIDs reduced pain and disability, but provided clinically unimportant effects over placebo. ...NSAIDs increased the risk of gastrointestinal reactions by 2.5 times (95% CI 1.2 to 5.2), although the median duration of included trials was (only) 7 days.”



Machado GC, Maher CG, Ferreira PH, et al Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for spinal pain: systematic review and meta-analysis. *Ann. Rheumatic Dis.* **2017** Jul;76(7):1269-1278. PMID: 28153830

“Six Nurofen/Day = Heart Attack Highway”

Conclusions:

All NSAIDs, including naproxen, were found to be associated with an (24-58%) increased risk of acute myocardial infarction. ...Use for 8-30 days at a high dose was particularly harmful for ibuprofen (>1200 mg/day = 6 tablets/day), naproxen (>750 mg/day), and rofecoxib (>25 mg/day).”



Bally et al. Risk of acute myocardial infarction with NSAIDs in real world use: bayesian meta-analysis of individual patient data. *BMJ* May **2017**;357:j1909 PMID: 28487435.

“Opioid Analgesics provide minimal benefit.”

Conclusions:

“...First systematic review of the effect of opioids (20 RCT's) for chronic low back pain patients. At least 50% of subjects stopped medication due to poor outcomes or serious adverse side-effects.”



Shaheed C et al, Efficacy, Tolerability, and Dose-Dependent Effects of Opioid Analgesics for Low Back Pain A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *JAMA Intern Med.* **2016**;176(7):958-968. PMID: 27213267.

“Sciatica medication found to be no more effective than placebo.”

Conclusions:

“No significant differences were observed with respect to any secondary outcome at either week 8 or week 52.”



Mathieson S, (Chiro) et al Trial of Pregabalin for Acute and Chronic Sciatica. *N Engl J Med.* **2017** Mar 23;376(12):1111-1120 PMID 28328324