

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs

Information for
Parents, Carers &
Young People



leeds children's
hospital

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Introduction

This leaflet contains information about non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) in the treatment of juvenile arthritis. It tells you about how these medicines work, how they should be given and whether there are any side effects.

The NSAID you/your child has been given is called

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You should read this alongside any information provided by the manufacturers in the medicine package.

Why have I been given this leaflet?

The information in this leaflet will help you to remember what your doctor has told you about this medicine and to help your decision regarding whether you/your child will take it.

For most medicines, information is provided by the manufacturer in the medicine package. However, some NSAIDs do not have a licence for use in juvenile arthritis. Therefore the information provided by the manufacturer does not tell you everything you need to know. This leaflet has been written to give you this extra information.

What are NSAIDs and how do they work?

NSAIDs prevent the body from making the substances that cause inflammation. In this way they reduce the pain, swelling and stiffness of juvenile arthritis. NSAIDs may take one or two weeks to have an effect.

How should I give this medicine?

NSAIDs are given in tablet, capsule or liquid form. Tablets and capsules should be swallowed with a full glass of water or milk. Soluble tablets should be mixed with water. With liquid medicines and soluble tablets, you may be given an oral syringe to help you measure the right amount of medicine for you/your child.

Older children may be prescribed modified-release tablets, which release the medicine slowly through the day. These tablets should be swallowed whole and must not be crushed.

Always give these medicines with or just after food, such as a meal or a glass of milk and a biscuit. Full instructions will be written on the Pharmacy label on the medicine bottle. Please follow these instructions carefully.

If you forget to give a dose, give it as soon as you remember. If it is nearly time for the next dose, miss out the one that you forgot.

If you/your child is sick within 15 minutes of giving a dose, repeat the dose.

This medicine may be recommended for at least 3 months after the pain and swelling have gone. Keep giving the medicine until your doctor tells you to stop. Do not stop it yourself without talking to the doctor.

When should NSAIDs be avoided?

There are people with certain medical conditions who should not take NSAIDs, or who should take them with extra care.

The manufacturer's leaflet will explain this in more detail. Please tell your doctor if you/your child has any of the conditions listed.

Safe reliable contraception is very important when taking certain medications. Some medications can cause abnormalities to an unborn child during pregnancy and can affect both the male sperm and the female eggs. Please discuss contraception or planning a pregnancy with your doctor or nurse. They can give you information on what risks the medication may cause to you and your baby.

If you think there is a possibility that you are pregnant or your partner may be pregnant please contact your nurse specialist or family doctor immediately.

Are there any side effects?

All medicines can cause side effects. The leaflet provided by the manufacturer for this medicine contains a comprehensive list of the effects reported.

Children generally tolerate NSAIDs well. The commonest side effect is indigestion, which is less likely if the medicine is given after food. Indigestion can very rarely lead to bleeding or a stomach ulcer. If this happens, you/your child's stools may turn black and tarry. It is important that you inform the doctor immediately if this occurs.

Other side effects may include mild headaches, dizziness or a skin rash. Some NSAIDs can occasionally cause a light-sensitive rash. Use a high factor sunscreen cream in the summer to help prevent this problem.

Rarely NSAIDs can worsen asthma control in children affected by asthma, but the majority of children with asthma can take NSAIDs without any problem.

Everyone reacts differently to medicines. It is very unlikely that you/your child will have all the listed effects.

Do NSAIDs affect any other medicines?

This medicine can be taken safely with most other medicines. However, you should tell your doctor or pharmacist about all the other medicines they take. This includes any medicines prescribed by another doctor as well as medicines bought from a pharmacy or supermarket and any herbal remedies.

If you/your child is prescribed a new medicine, or you want to buy a medicine (for your child) from a pharmacy, it is important that you tell the doctor or pharmacist about all the medicines that they take, including this one. You should also tell your/your child's dentist.

Where should I store this medicine at home?

NSAIDs should be stored in a cool, dry place, away from direct sunlight.

It is important that all medicines are stored out of reach of children.

So these medicines do not have a licence. What does this mean?

The leaflet called unlicensed medicines available at <http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk/> tells you more about medicine licensing regulations. It also tells you why unlicensed medicines are sometimes used.

Why do some NSAIDs not have a licence for use in children?

Sometimes a medicine has been licensed for a certain use in adults and later experience or research shows that it works for a similar condition in children. There is no legal requirement for the manufacturer to apply to the Government to have the more recent information added to the licence. In some situations it is not economical for the manufacturer to obtain or extend a licence.

NSAIDs are made by the manufacturer to treat a range of conditions in adults, including rheumatoid arthritis, but they are also widely used in children.

You should be reassured that your doctor will have thought carefully about which medicine is best for your condition.

Where do I get a further supply?

Further supplies are available from your GP. Ask your GP to write a prescription for your child when you have a few days supply left and take the prescription to your local pharmacy.

How can I find out more?

This leaflet has been written to provide general information about the use of NSAIDs in children. If you have any more specific questions or concerns, please speak to one of the following:

Children's Rheumatology Nursing Team	0113 392 0683
Paediatric Rheumatology Secretary	0113 392 0666



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