

Over the Counter Pain Management

First try:

Tylenol Arthritis Pain

- 650 mg per tab of Acetaminophen
- Long acting/extended release. Lasts up to 8 hours

How to take it...

- Take on an empty stomach
- **Do not exceed** 4000 mg of Acetaminophen per 24 hour period
 - This is 2 Tylenol Arthritis Pain tabs, 3 times every 24 hours (= 3900 mg)
 - Tylenol Arthritis can be taken with regular or extra strength Tylenol for faster relief
 - As long as you stay within the 4000 mg limit, it is safe to take Tylenol indefinitely
- Do not take Acetaminophen if you:
 - have an allergy to it
 - have a compromised liver or liver disease, or
 - are a heavy alcohol user

Did you know?

Regular Tylenol and Extra Strength Tylenol only gives pain relief for 4 hours whereas Tylenol Arthritis gives up to 8 hours of pain relief.

For knee, shoulder, hand or foot arthritis, also try:

Creams and gels

- Capsaicin cream – contains chili peppers (Lakota and Zostrix)
 - Tricks the nerves with heat
- Creams with salicylates - NSAID (Aspercreme, Rub A535)
 - Tricks the nerves with cool and decreases inflammation
- Creams with Diclofenac – NSAID (Voltaren 1%)
 - Relieves swelling and inflammation

How to use...

- Be consistent and persistent as this method works over time not right away
- 2-3 times per day for 3-4 weeks
- Use sparingly and wash hands after use
- If no relief in 4 weeks, either try a different type or increase the concentration
- Once you feel some relief, attempt to back off on oral meds
- Though rare, NSAID creams may cause the same side effects as oral NSAIDS

Next try:

Non Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDS)

(Also known as COX-1 Inhibitors)

Three types over the counter:

1. Ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) 200 - 400 mg, every 6 hours
 - Maximum dosage 1200 mg/day for 7 days or less
2. Naproxen (Aleve) 220 mg, twice a day
 - Maximum dose 440 mg/day for 7 days or less
3. Acetylsalicylic Acid (Aspirin or ASA) 300 mg - 1000 mg, 4 times per day
 - Maximum dose 4000 mg/day for 7 days or less
 - ASA is not recommended for OA pain management.

NSAIDS have more side effects than Tylenol. They can:

- Irritate the stomach lining
- Increase blood pressure
- Thin the blood, which can cause you to bleed more easily
- Cause kidney problems

How to take...

- Always take with food
- Ideal for flare-ups while using Tylenol (**can be safely taken together**) or short term anti-inflammatory trial (5-7 days) to break the chronic inflammatory pain cycle
- Avoid alcohol while taking NSAID (can cause stomach bleeds)
- Do not take any NSAID along with Aspirin or any other NSAID
- **Talk with your GP and/or pharmacist** if you have kidney disease, high blood pressure, cardiac issues, diabetes, and/or have a bleeding disorder, or are on medications for any of these issues, before taking any NSAID (cream or oral)

**Always read the label
and keep track of total
24 hour dose of
whatever you are taking.
DO NOT exceed
recommended dose.**