

A Dose of Knowledge: SAFELY MANAGING YOUR PAIN



Conducting an Educational Workshop

Featuring everything you need to host an educational event for older adults and their loved ones on how to appropriately manage their pain — from over-the-counter (OTC) pain medications to prescription medications to non-drug therapies.

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Conducting an Educational Workshop



Introduction

Purpose

- This workshop is designed to provide all the resources community leaders like you need to conduct an educational workshop for older adults and their caregivers on safely and appropriately managing their pain — whether they're turning to over-the-counter (OTC) pain medications, taking prescription medications, or using non-drug therapies.

Audience

- The primary target audience for this workshop is older adults living in your community. It is also suitable for family members, caregivers, and anyone who wants to learn more about safe and appropriate pain management.
- The number of participants in a given workshop will vary by site.

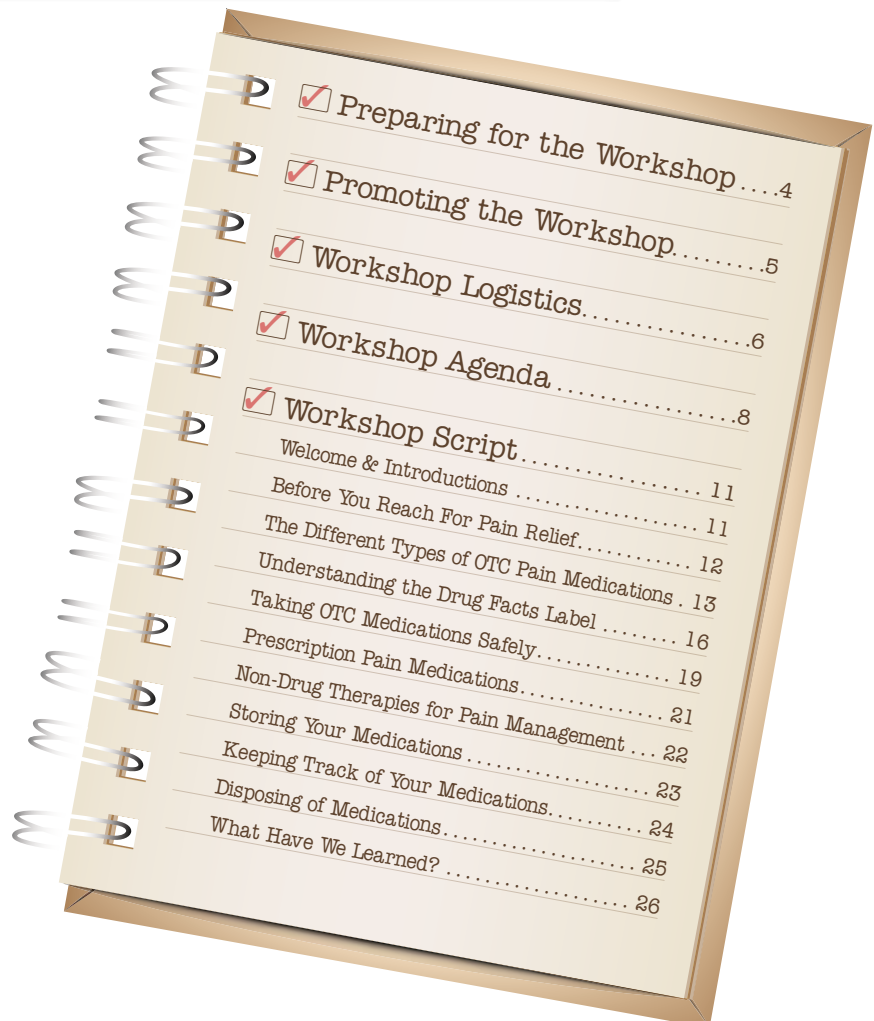
Workshop Goals

- Offer an interactive and supportive workshop environment where participants can learn about and discuss safe and appropriate pain management.
- Teach participants about the different types of over-the-counter pain medications, prescription medications, and non-drug therapies; and provide tips on safely choosing, taking, storing, and disposing of medications.
- Ultimately increase the number of older adults in your community who are safely and appropriately managing their pain.

Objectives

- Define the different types of medications used to relieve pain, including OTC and prescription medications.
- Educate participants on the differences between acetaminophen and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), and how to choose the proper OTC pain medication to safely and appropriately manage their pain.
- Help participants understand how to read the Drug Facts Label.
- Educate participants on how to safely take OTC pain medication and address common myths and misconceptions.
- Provide an overview of prescription pain medications and non-drug therapies, their role in pain management, and associated risks.
- Educate participants on how to safely keep track of, store, and dispose of their medications to prevent misuse or abuse.

Leaders' Note: Key take-aways are shared throughout this guide and emphasize what you should focus on during each section.



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Preparing for the Workshop

In preparation for the workshop you will need to:

- **Choose a date and time** — if possible, coordinate with other events that your audience may be attending.
- **Secure a location** — see page 6 for space requirements.
- **Promote the workshop** — see page 5 for tips on getting the word out.
- **Print out workshop materials** — see page 7 for a full list of suggested materials that you can print out once you have a head count.
- **Download the educational films and slide presentation** — find out where to access them on page 7, and either save to a laptop or to a thumb drive, depending on your equipment.
- **Obtain all additional equipment and supplies** — see page 7 for a detailed list.
- **Put together an agenda for the day** — see the workshop agenda on pages 8 - 10 to guide you and print out copies once you have a head count. Research any areas where you need more information and be prepared to answer questions or refer participants to additional educational materials. See page 7 for organizations and campaigns with additional resources.
- **If you have access to a healthcare professional** — such as a doctor, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or pharmacist — see if they can join you for the workshop to answer questions and provide medical information and support. You may want to contact your local hospital network or department of health for suggestions.

Leaders' Note: Not all locations will have access to equipment to play the educational films and slideshow. Skip those instructions in the script if you cannot show them.



Promoting the Workshop

Getting the Word Out

Consider how you will let your intended audience know about the workshop. Use your own experience, or the experience of others in your community, to determine the best ways to promote and draw people to the workshop. Below are some ideas to get you started:

- **Print out copies** of the workshop promotional poster and fill in the date, time, location, and registration details (if requiring RSVPs).
- **Distribute the poster** through organizations that have regular contact with older adults and their caregivers, such as:
 - Senior centers
 - Churches, synagogues, and other faith-based organizations
 - State and/or local agencies for elders and aging
 - Assisted living facilities and adult day care centers
 - Hospitals
 - Medical offices and community health centers
 - Local pharmacies
- **Hang the poster** at the workshop venue as well as on community bulletin boards such as those found at libraries, YMCAs, community centers, recreation centers, coffee shops, and more.
- **Advertise.** Consider your audience when determining the best ways to reach them and use some or all of the below:
 - Social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter will allow you to create events, notify friends and followers, and spread the word. Consider tagging the Alliance for Aging Research in your social outreach — @Aging_Research.
 - Many newspapers have a section that lists local support groups and seminars. Check the “contact us” section of your local newspaper and keep in mind that additional rates and fees may apply.
 - Find your local radio station and search online for the media contact person who will help you determine rates and write a script for the announcement.
 - Craigslist is an online advertisement resource where you can share community events. To get started go to www.craigslist.com to post to classifieds.
 - Community listservs can also be great venues for getting the word out. E-mail the workshop details to the listserv moderator or if you are a member, send an e-mail for posting.
- **Tell people.** There is no substitute for personal contact. Whenever possible, call or speak in person about the workshop with those who are most likely to refer participants.

Registering Participants

Decide if you will require registration/RSPVs. Advance registration can help you to better plan for the workshop, but plan to accommodate individuals who may show up without registering. Make sure you provide registration contact information on your poster, and in all advertisements and outreach.

Workshop Logistics

Timing

This workshop will last approximately 1 hour and 10 minutes, including time for questions and answers at the end.

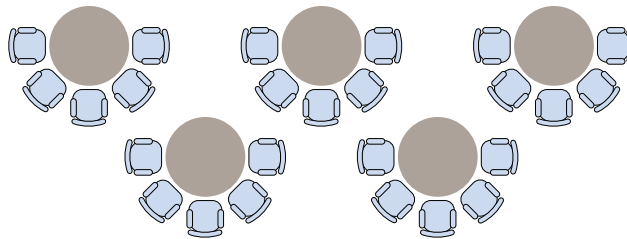
Leaders' Note: *If you have less time for your workshop, decide in advance which sections you will pare back.*

Space Requirements and Room Set-Up

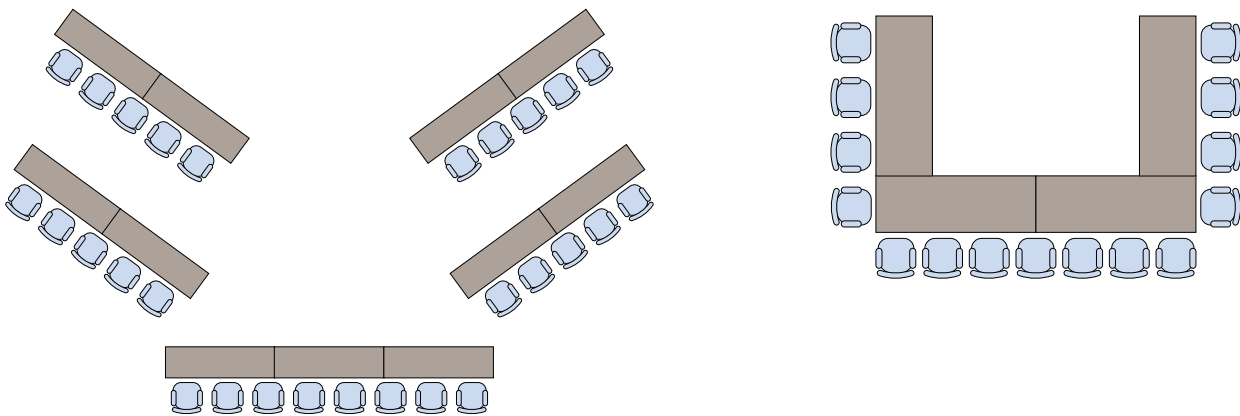
The space you will need depends on your group size and any COVID-19 restrictions. If there are no restrictions, it's ideal to give each participant a seat at a table to best enable them to take notes and participate in the writing components of the workshop. If possible, choose a venue that is handicap accessible.

Here are some suggestions for set-up:

- If round tables are used, place tables so that no table is immediately in front of another.



- If rectangular tables are used, set them up chevron style for a larger group, or in a "U" shape for a group smaller than 15.



- If you only have chairs available or there isn't room for tables, set chairs up in rows or in a "U" shape, and either distribute or have participants bring clipboards, notebooks, or binders for writing activities.

Materials and Equipment List

- This leader's guide
- *A Dose of Knowledge: Safely Managing Your Pain* participant brochure
- Educational films
- Slideshow
- Workshop agendas and local resource list (if you created them)
- Empty OTC pain medication pill bottles or boxes as examples
- Sign-in sheet (if you are using one)
- Name tags
- Electronics to show the educational films and slideshow (don't forget all necessary cords)
- Electrical or duct tape to tape down cords
- Table or podium (for leader)
- Pointer
- Flipcharts and markers OR equivalent
- Writing utensils and paper
- Clipboards, notebooks, OR binders (if tables are unavailable)
- Water or other beverages if possible

The first four items (highlighted in **blue**) can be downloaded from the Alliance for Aging Research website at www.agingresearch.org/pain-management-workshop and printed/downloaded in advance of the workshop.

Additional Resources




If you'd like to provide additional supplemental resources for participants, visit the following organizations and campaigns to download tip sheets, brochures, and more:




- Acetaminophen Awareness Coalition www.knowyourdose.org
- Alliance for Aging Research www.agingresearch.org/medication-safety
- American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) www.aapcc.org
- BeMedWise www.bemedwise.org
- Get Relief Responsibly www.getreliefresponsibly.com
- Safe Kids Worldwide www.safekids.org
- Up and Away and Out of Sight www.upandaway.org




After the Workshop

Please take a few moments to fill out the leader's evaluation on Survey Monkey at <https://qrco.de/bcWNzc>. This will help us to better support you and other workshop leaders in the future and we thank you in advance for taking the time.

Workshop Agenda

 Time	Topic	 Key Take-Aways	 To-Do
:00	Welcome & Introductions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome participants and facilitate introductions • Go over workshop logistics • Facilitate participant pre-evaluation
:10	Before You Reach for Pain Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • >25 million Americans suffer from some level of daily pain • Different medications manage different pain needs and have different risks and benefits • Discuss your pain management needs with a healthcare professional 	
:14	The Different Types of Over-the-Counter Pain Medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acetaminophen and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are the two main types of OTC pain medication • OTC pain medications are safe for most people when taken as directed; however, just because they are available without a prescription doesn't mean they are harmless • Talk to your healthcare professional or pharmacist if you're unsure of what medication to take 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play "OTC Pain Medication, What You Need to Know" educational film (length 6:55)
:25	Understanding the Drug Facts Label	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All OTC medications include important information in the Drug Facts Label like dosing directions, potential side effects, and more • Not all OTC pain medications are right for everyone so be sure to read the label for every medication, every time you take it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk participants through each section of the Drug Facts Label using the slide presentation • Hand out empty OTC medication containers if you brought them

 Time	Topic	 Key Take-Aways	 To-Do
:35	Taking Over-the-Counter Medications Safely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never take more OTC pain medication than directed because this is an overdose and can lead to severe consequences • Don't double-up, take the next dose too soon, take more than directed, take for more than 10 days for pain, or take for more than three days for fever 	
:41	Prescription Pain Medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescription pain medications can be very effective in managing pain but can be habit-forming or addictive if not managed under the care of a healthcare professional • They can also be abused and are associated with accidental overdose deaths in people of all ages so take steps to avoid misuse and abuse 	
:45	Non-Drug Therapies for Pain Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medications aren't your only option for pain relief • Non-drug therapies include exercise, stress management, and more 	
:50	Storing Your Medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you can, keep medications in their original containers, keep packaging with important information, and avoid mixing medications • Store all medications away from little ones and people of all ages who may want to abuse them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play "Safe Storage of Over-the-Counter Pain Medications" educational film (length 1:11)
:54	Keeping Track of Your Medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep track of your medications and when you last took them with a medication tracker, app, or whatever method works best for you • Tell a healthcare professional about all of your medications, supplements, and vitamins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play "Keeping Track of Your Medications" educational film (length 1:05) • Hand out brochures

Time	 Topic	 Key Take-Aways	 To-Do
:58	Disposing of Medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best way to dispose of most medications is to drop them off at a drug take back site, location, or program immediately • If you cannot get to a drug take back location promptly, some medications must be flushed because they could be harmful to others. • You can also dispose of most medications in the garbage; just MIX, SEAL, and THROW AWAY 	
1:00	What Have We Learned?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate participant post-evaluation • If you have additional time and you feel like there are still questions, stories to be shared, etc. — allow for more conversation and networking
1:10	Adjourn		

The following suggested script and key take-aways are designed to make it easier for you to cover a lot of material in a short amount of time. However, you should read the suggested script a few times and do some background research in advance to make sure you're comfortable with the material. While it's important to script your talking points when discussing medical information, you should also be sure to make the script your own.

If you have recruited a healthcare professional, be sure you discuss in advance who will cover what portions of the program. Having a healthcare professional participating will help to answer any medical questions. That said — the workshop is designed to be conducted by community leaders and DOES NOT require a healthcare professional's involvement.

Workshop Script

Welcome & Introductions

Leaders' Note: Arrive at least 45 minutes before the start time to familiarize yourself with the room and facilities, specifically:

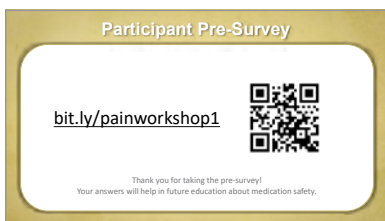
- Light switches/adjustment
- Temperature controls
- Arrangement of participant chairs and/or tables
- Location of leader's table or podium
- Audio-visual equipment — test out in advance to troubleshoot technical difficulties
- Location of fire exits and restrooms



Slide #1

WELCOME participants to the workshop and introduce yourself. If there are fewer than 15 people, you may want to have them introduce themselves to the group. Be mindful of time and limit this to about five minutes.

FACILITATE the participant pre-survey. Give them around five minutes to complete it.



Slide #2

PASS OUT participant quiz and give them five minutes to take it. Let them know that the answers will be discussed throughout the workshop.

SAY: Before we start, please take a few minutes to take this pre-survey. This survey is designed to see what you know and a follow-up survey will see what you've learned. This will help determine the effectiveness of the workshop resources and are completely anonymous. The pre-survey can be accessed with the link or the QR code on the screen. With most Smartphones you should be able to use your camera to open the QR code. By completing both surveys, you will be entered for a chance to win a gift..

Leaders' Note: Decide if you will be answering questions as they arise, or if you will require that all questions be saved until the end of the workshop. Be sure to let participants know either way.

Before You Reach For Pain Relief

Key Take-Aways:

- >25 million Americans suffer from some level of daily pain
- Different medications manage different pain needs and have different risks and benefits
- Discuss your pain management needs with a healthcare professional



Slide #3

SAY: You're probably here because you or a loved one uses medications to help manage pain. A study found that more than 25 million Americans deal with from some level of daily pain.¹

Acute pain has a sudden onset, can be severe, but lasts for a short period of time — from hours to days, but no longer than six months. It can be caused by injury, illness, or surgery.

Persistent (or chronic pain) is ongoing or recurrent pain that lasts beyond the usual course of acute illness or injury — several months to many years. Persistent pain doesn't mean that a person is always in pain. It can be mild to severe, complex to manage, and caused by injury, arthritis, cancer, and other diseases. If you or a loved one suffers from persistent pain, you know that it can cause physical distress and seriously impact your quality of life.



Slide #4

Different medications can help manage different pain needs. They also have different risks and benefits that you need to consider. Whether you take medication occasionally for minor aches and pains, or suffer from persistent pain, it's important that you choose the right pain medication and know how to use it safely and appropriately.

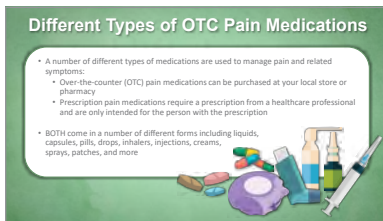
You may have heard about the dangers of doubling up and taking too much acetaminophen, or the cardiovascular risks of NSAIDs. You may have concerns about balancing the risks and benefits of prescription pain medication opioids and non-pharmacological (or non-drug) therapies. This workshop will address many of these concerns, but the best thing you can do is to make a personalized pain management plan with your healthcare professional that balances benefits and risks, and that works for you.

Developing a pain management plan should involve setting and sharing your goals with your healthcare professional. This may include things like spending more time with family, getting back to hobbies, exercising more, managing pain while healing, etc. You should also discuss any other medications you currently take including over-the-counter medications, prescriptions, supplements, topicals, vitamins, and herbals; as well as your medical history.

The Different Types of Over-the-Counter Pain Medications

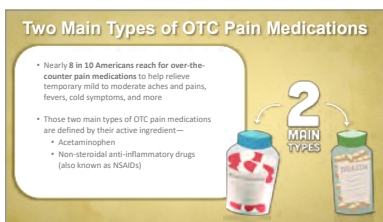
Key Take-Aways:

- Acetaminophen and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are the two main types of OTC pain medication
- OTC pain medications are safe for most people when taken as directed; however, just because they are available without a prescription doesn't mean they are harmless
- Talk to your healthcare professional or pharmacist if you're unsure of what medication to take



Slide #5

SAY: There are a number of different types of medications that are used to manage pain and related symptoms. Some are available over-the-counter (OTC) and can be purchased at your local store or pharmacy. Others require a prescription from a healthcare professional and are only intended for the person with the prescription. They both come in a number of different forms including liquids, capsules, pills, drops, inhalers, injections, creams, sprays, patches, and more.



Slide #6

SAY: OTC medications are an important tool in self-management of minor aches and pains and nearly eight in 10 Americans reach for over-the-counter pain medications to help relieve temporary mild to moderate aches and pains, fevers, cold symptoms, and more.²

Choosing an OTC pain medication can seem overwhelming since there are hundreds of choices, but there are really only two main types. They treat similar symptoms but work differently in the body and have different indications, risks and benefits, active ingredients, and directions for use. The

information in this workshop will help you choose the medications that will do the best job treating your pain and that are safest for you.

The two main types of OTC pain medications are defined by their active ingredient — acetaminophen and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (also known as NSAIDs). These two ingredients are found in pain relievers, fever reducers, sleep aids, cough & cold remedies, and medications for allergy relief.

Let's take a deeper dive to learn a bit more about OTC medications. The video I am about to play gives valuable information about how you can choose the right OTC pain medication for you or your loved one and take it safely.



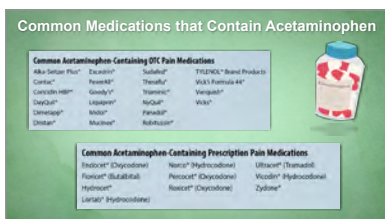
Slide #7

PLAY the educational film “OTC Pain Medication, What You Need to Know” (length 6:55) to give an overview for participants.



Slide #8

SAY: As you heard in the video, acetaminophen is found in more than 600 OTC and prescription medications.



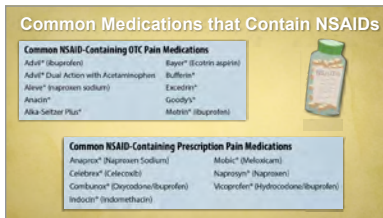
Slide #9

Some common brands of acetaminophen-containing OTC medications you may know and take are Tylenol®, NyQuil®/DayQuil®, Excedrin®, Alka-Seltzer Plus®, Mucinex®, Robitussin®, Goody's®, Sudafed®, and Theraflu®. Prescription medications that contain acetaminophen include Vicodin, Percocet, and more. You can see additional examples on the slide.



Slide #10

NSAIDs are found in more than 900 OTC and prescription medications. NSAID use is very common, especially among older adults.



Slide #11

Some of the most well-known NSAIDs are aspirin, ibuprofen, and naproxen sodium. Common brand names you may know and take are Bayer® Aspirin, Motrin®, Advil®, and Aleve®.

There are even medications that contain BOTH acetaminophen and NSAIDs such as Advil® Dual Action with Acetaminophen, Excedrin Migraine®, Excedrin Extra-Strength®, and Vanquish®.



Slide #12

OTC pain medications are safe for most people when they take them as directed. However, although you can buy them without a prescription, all medications can be dangerous if misused or abused. Acetaminophen and NSAIDs both have risks which vary from person to person.

One option may be better for you than others because of medications that you already take, or because of other health conditions you have. As we age, medications can also affect us differently than when we were younger, and our risk of adverse events goes up.³ So just because you took a certain medication before doesn't mean it's still appropriate now. Always remember that if you're unsure of which medication you should take, you should talk to your healthcare professional or pharmacist, and never hesitate to ask questions.

Understanding the Drug Facts Label

Key Take-Aways:

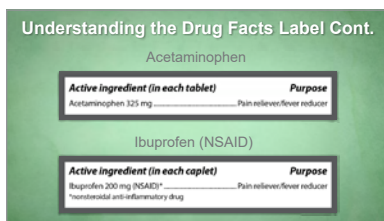
- All OTC medications include important information in the Drug Facts Label like dosing directions, potential side effects, and more
- Not all OTC pain medications are right for everyone so be sure to read the label for every medication, every time you take it



Slide #13

The Drug Facts Label is listed on the back of the OTC medication packaging and is required by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to contain specific information about ingredients, warnings, dosing directions, and other details on taking the medication safely. It's important that you properly read and understand the Drug Facts Label so that you can safely choose and take the medication that is best for you and your symptoms. And remember to reread the Drug Facts Label each time you take a medication.

HAND OUT empty OTC medication containers if you have any. This will help people visualize and follow along.



Slide #14

SAY: Now, let's move on to breaking down the different sections of the Drug Facts Label. If you flip over an OTC medication bottle or box, you will see the medication's Drug Facts Label.

The following slides will show you details from the Drug Facts Label for two different pain medications with different active ingredients — acetaminophen and NSAID.

This first section is the "Active Ingredients/Purpose" section. It tells you the active ingredients that make the medication work, the primary purpose of the ingredient, and how much active ingredient is in each dose. Different medications can contain different amounts of active ingredients in each dose — for example, regular strength versus extra strength, or 8-hour release.

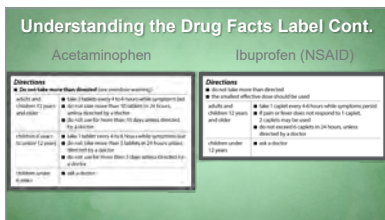


Slide #17

NSAIDs (except for aspirin) put people at a higher risk for stomach bleeding, especially people who are 60 years or older, have a history of stomach ulcers or bleeding problems, take other blood thinners or steroids, or drink more than three alcohol-containing drinks per day. There are a number of other conditions noted that can increase your risk — if you have any of them consult your healthcare professional before you take an NSAID. You should not use an NSAID right before or after heart surgery. Also, several years ago, the FDA required an update to the Drug Facts labeling on all NSAIDs — except aspirin — to provide consumers additional information relating to the risk of heart attack and stroke associated with NSAIDs. Risk for these serious side effects goes up as early as the first few weeks of use and grows the longer you take them⁴, and the more you take. Note that if you are one of the many people that takes low-dose aspirin for protection against heart attack and stroke, ibuprofen can interfere with that protective effect.

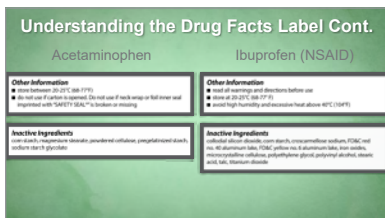
Other warnings that might be contained on the label include potential allergic reactions, side effects, and more. See the Drug Facts Label on your medication for all warnings.

That’s a lot and can make OTC pain medications seem scary, but they are generally safe and play an important role in pain management.



Slide #18

This next section lists the “Directions” for taking your medication. This section is very important as it details the proper dose of medication to take, how often to take it, and how much you can take in a 24-hour period.



Slide #19

The “Other Information” section includes information on properly storing your medication to prevent expiration. Most medications should be stored in a cool, dry place and up and away and out of sight of little ones, or people who may want to abuse medications. Also, you should not use a medication if the safety seal is broken or missing.

Next, you will see the “Inactive Ingredients” section. This section lists any other ingredients used in the medication, including any preservatives, stabilizers, flavorings, and colorings. Be sure to read this section thoroughly, especially if you or a loved one has an allergy.



Slide #20

Lastly, the “Questions or Comments” section lists the number to call if you have any questions about the medication. You can call the company’s 800 number listed on the label, the local Poison Control Center at 800-222-1222, or your healthcare professional. Remember, your pharmacist can also help answer questions.

Taking Over-the-Counter Medications Safely

Key Take-Aways:

- Never take more OTC pain medication than directed because this is an overdose and can lead to severe consequences
- Don’t double-up, take the next dose too soon, take more than directed, take for more than 10 days for pain, or take for more than three days for fever

SAY: Once you’ve chosen an OTC pain medication that’s right for you and your pain, there are a number of things that you should do to ensure that you and your loved ones are taking them safely and appropriately.



Slide #21

Here are some important ways to make sure you're not taking too much OTC medication:

- Even if you've taken a medication before, read the label to make sure you remember the dosing directions correctly.
- Take the smallest effective dose for the shortest time needed.
- If a medication doesn't effectively relieve your pain, have a conversation with your healthcare professional about treating the cause of the pain, rather than just relieving the symptoms.
- Stop use and contact your healthcare professional if your pain gets worse, you develop new symptoms, you have redness or swelling where you have the pain, or the pain lasts for more than 10 days.
- Stop use and contact your healthcare professional if your fever gets worse or lasts for more than three days.
- Don't take more than directed in one dose.
- Don't take more than directed in a 24-hour period, even if you still have fever or pain. The daily maximum for adults over the age of 12 is 4,000 mg (milligrams) of acetaminophen, 1,200 mg of ibuprofen (an NSAID), and 660 mg of naproxen sodium (an NSAID).
- Don't take another dose too soon. Make sure you keep track of when you took your last dose.
- If your medication comes with a dosing device, don't use something else like kitchen spoons or household utensils as they are not designed to measure medications.
- Don't double up by taking more than one medication with the same active ingredient at a time, and don't forget to count your prescription medications and other OTC medications like those for cold and flu, because they could also contain acetaminophen or an NSAID and count towards the daily maximum.



Slide #22

Taking more than directed can result in an overdose, and severe consequences can occur. If you or someone you know takes more than the recommended dose of any medication, call the Poison Control Center at 800-222-1222 (often listed on the Drug Facts Label), even if they feel fine, since serious consequences can occur without any symptoms.

Prescription Pain Medications

Key Take-Aways:

- Prescription pain medications can be very effective in managing pain but can be habit-forming or addictive if not managed under the care of a healthcare professional
- They can also be abused and are associated with accidental overdose deaths in people of all ages so take steps to avoid misuse and abuse

SAY:

Let's turn now to pain medications that people can get with a prescription from their healthcare professional. Prescription pain medications, sometimes referred to as opioids, are designed to manage moderate-to-severe pain. Commonly prescribed opioids include codeine, fentanyl, hydrocodone, morphine, oxycodone, tramadol, and others. Your healthcare professional may also prescribe other medications to help manage pain like steroids, muscle relaxants, antidepressants, anticonvulsants, interventional pain procedures, and non-pharmacological (non-drug) therapies.

Prescription pain medications can be very effective in managing moderate to severe pain when used under the supervision of a healthcare professional; however, some can be habit-forming, or addictive if not managed under the care of a healthcare professional. Some can also be abused and are associated with accidental overdose deaths in people of all ages.



Slide #23

Prescription misuse and abuse often starts in the home.⁵ Some tips to avoid misuse and abuse are to:

- Never share your prescription medications with anyone.
- Always keep your medications stored safely and in their original containers to avoid any confusion. Be sure to relock the safety cap after each use.
- Always store prescription pain medications up and away and out of sight of family members or visitors in your home — especially young children. You may wish to use a lockable storage container.
- Only use as prescribed by your healthcare professional.
- Make sure you understand and always follow the dosing instructions from your healthcare professional.
- Never take more than one medication with the same active ingredient at the same time unless directed to by your healthcare professional.
- Seek advice from your healthcare professional to determine whether or not you are ready to stop using your prescription medication.

Non-Drug Therapies for Pain Management

Key Take-Aways:

- Medications aren't your only option for pain relief
- Non-drug therapies include exercise, stress management, and more



Slide #24

SAY: If you are looking for non-drug therapies that can be used as alternatives or alongside your pain medications, there are a number of non-drug therapies that may help relieve your pain.

Non-drug therapies include mind-body exercises like yoga and meditation, aromatherapy, and deep breathing which can help your mind and body relax by focusing on an enjoyable and soothing activity. Pet therapy, which includes spending time with a therapy animal, may help improve pain and emotional distress. Acupuncture or massage may help alleviate stress and ease painful areas or trigger points in your joints and muscles. Regular exercise routines and physical therapy sessions can help with stiffness, improve joint mobility and flexibility, strengthen your muscles, and combat fatigue to help you better manage your pain. There are also pain management devices that stimulate your nerves to help control your pain. These devices and all non-drug therapy options should only be used in consultation with your healthcare professional.

Storing Your Medications

Key Take-Aways:

- When you can, keep medications in their original containers, keep packaging with important information, and avoid mixing medications
- Store all medications away from little ones and people of all ages who may want to abuse them

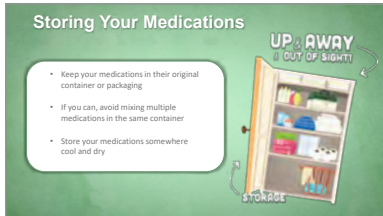
SAY: Now that you we've covered how to properly choose and take medications, let's talk about how to properly store them.

Let's watch this quick clip for an overview.



Slide #25

PLAY “Safe Storage of Over-the-Counter Pain Medications” (length 1:11) educational film



Slide #26

SAY: It’s best to keep your medication in its original container so you have the directions, warnings, and other important information on-hand. If you use a daily or weekly pill organizer, or other container to store your medication, hold on to the original packaging. Although it may seem inconvenient, it is preferable to avoid mixing multiple medications in the same container so that you don’t take the wrong one by mistake.

As mentioned in the film, make sure you find a safe place to store all your medications. It’s usually best to store them somewhere cool and dry — such as a hall closet or kitchen cabinet. Medications are sensitive, and their ingredients can be damaged by the heat and humidity from the shower and bath if stored in a bathroom cabinet. If you notice that your medications are expired, discolored, crumbling, or look otherwise damaged — don’t take them because they may no longer work and can even be unsafe.

ASK: How many of you have young children in your life?



Slide #27

SAY: A study found that in over a third of cases where a child got into someone’s medication and ended up in the emergency room, that medication belonged to a grandparent.⁶ You also have to keep in mind that medications meant for children can still be quite dangerous if they take too much.

Each year, around 50,000 young children in the U.S. are taken to the emergency room because they got into medications that were left within reach.⁷ So, if you have little ones to think about, you need to be sure to store all your medications up and away and out of sight. This may mean the top shelf of a kitchen cabinet or hall closet, where it is difficult for children to reach. Make sure you never leave

them out on a table, countertop, or sink, or any spot that is easy for children or others to access. You may even want to consider storing them in a lockable storage container. Also be sure to keep any purses, bags, and coats that contain medications out of reach at home and when visiting others. Remember to relock safety caps tightly and put away medications after every use. Keep in mind that most pill organizers don't have child resistant closures and can be easily opened by anyone, so be sure to keep these up and away too.

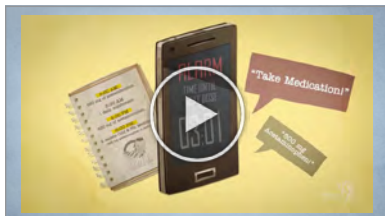
Storing medications properly not only protects young children from accessing them, but also prevents older children and teens from intentionally abusing them to get high, or worse, to attempt suicide. From 2000 to 2018, more than 1.6 million people between the ages of 10 and 25 attempted suicide by self-poisoning.⁸ Most of these suicide attempts were done with OTC pain medications.⁹

Keeping Track of Your Medications

Key Take-Aways:

- Keep track of your medications and when you last took them with a medication tracker, app, or whatever method works best for you
- Tell a healthcare professional about all of your medications, supplements, and vitamins

SAY: Storing your medications up and away and out of sight is important to do, but because they aren't in plain sight, it can become difficult to keep track of your medications, vitamins, and supplements. Also, the more medications you take, the more confusing it can be to keep them straight. Let's watch this short film that shows how to properly keep track of your medications.



Slide #28

PLAY "Keeping Track of Your Medications" (length 1:05) educational film

HAND OUT brochures.



Slide #29

SAY: Some people may prefer writing down dosing instructions and timing and keeping it in a familiar place. A tracker tool may be helpful. Others may prefer setting an alarm on their phones or using an app to give them reminders.

REFER participants to the medication tracker in the brochure.

SAY: Whatever you use to keep track, make sure you share the information with all members of your healthcare team, including your pharmacist, so that everyone is on the same page.

Disposing of Medications

Key Take-Aways:

- The best way to dispose of most medications is to drop them off at a drug take back site, location, or program immediately
- If you cannot get to a drug take back location promptly, some medications must be flushed because they could be harmful to others.
- You can also dispose of most medications in the garbage; just MIX, SEAL, and THROW AWAY



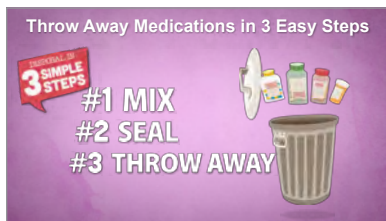
Slide #30

SAY: More than 40% of sold medications are believed to end up unused.¹⁰ One way to help reduce this waste is to talk to your healthcare professional and make sure you aren't getting prescribed more than you actually need. Also stay on top of auto refills, including those on-line, in case you no longer need to take those medications. The best way to dispose of most types of unused, unwanted, or expired medications (both prescription and over-the-counter) is to drop off the medications at a drug take back site, location, or program promptly. Check with your community and local drug stores for drop off sites. You can go to www.dea.gov or <https://safe.pharmacy/drug-disposal> to find a site near you.



Slide #31

If you cannot get to a take back location promptly, check to see if your medication is on the FDA Flush List. Medications on this list are those 1) with high abuse and/or misuse potential and 2) that can result in death from just one dose if taken inappropriately. Flushing those medications down the toilet is your best option if you cannot get to a drug take back site. However, don't flush your medication unless it is on the Flush List.



Slide #32

If your medication is not on the Flush List, the simplest way to dispose of it is to throw it away in three easy steps: MIX, SEAL, & THROW AWAY:

1. MIX - Remove the medication from its original container and mix it with something unappealing like kitty litter, dirt, or coffee grounds. That way if someone finds the medication, they're less likely to recognize it or want to take it.
2. SEAL - Make sure that you seal the medication in a container that prevents leaking — like a plastic sandwich bag or food container with a lid.
3. THROW AWAY - Now you can throw it away in the garbage and recycle the original container once you've destroyed any personal information.

What Have We Learned?



Slide #33

ASK: participants to take the post-survey" on-line. Remind them that their answers are anonymous and that they will help improve these and other education resources on medication safety. Also remind them that they need to do this post-survey to be entered for a chance to win a gift card.

SAY: Educating yourself on the different types of over-the-counter and prescription pain medications, and how to choose, use, store, and dispose of them, not only benefits you, but also protects your loved ones.

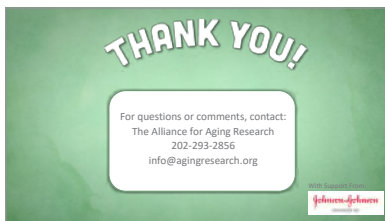
Remember to always read the Drug Facts Label and know exactly what types of medications you are taking. In addition to over-the-counter and prescription medications, there are many non-drug therapies you can use to safely and effectively relieve your pain. If you are ever unsure if what you are taking is right for you, talk to a healthcare professional like your doctor, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or pharmacist.

HAND OUT any additional resources that you prepared.

SAY: Hopefully you learned some valuable information today that will help you make informed decisions about your health and protect those around you. Does anyone have any questions or comments about today's session?

Leaders' Note: *If you have additional time and you feel like there are still questions, stories to be shared, etc. — allow for more conversation and networking.*

Thank you for joining today's workshop!



Slide #34

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