

Talk to your doctor, pharmacist, or call the Carolinas Poison Center at **1-800-222-1222**. Specially trained nurses and pharmacists are available to help, 24 hours a day.

Questions?

- Most medicines and supplements can cause minor adverse effects. Some should not be taken by people with certain medical conditions. Never take more than the dose recommended on the package.
- Many prescription pain medications and natural products, cough suppressants, sinus/allergy, and stomach medicines contain the same or similar ingredients found in OTC products. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if there are OTC products you should not take while taking prescription medication.



Important Supplement -Drug Interactions

If you are taking:	Talk to your Doctor if you are also taking:
Garlic powder * Decreased antiviral actions of saquinivir	Saquinavir (Fortovase®)
Ginkgo biloba Decreased blood pressure and heart rate	Diltiazem (Cardizem®) Nifedipine (Procardia®)
Ginkgo biloba * Increased risk of bleeding	Aspirin Warfarin (Coumadin®)
Quinine * Carbamazepine toxicity: drowsiness, slurred speech	Carbamazepine (Tegretol®)
St. John's Wort * Decreased effects of digoxin on the heart	Digoxin (Lanoxin®)
St. John's Wort * Decreased effects of nifedipine on the heart	Nifedipine (Procardia®)
St. John's Wort * Decreased effects of simvastatin on cholesterol	Simvastatin (Zocor®) Vytorin®
St. John's Wort * Decreased effects of warfarin	Warfarin (Coumadin®)
Vitamin E * Increased risk of bleeding	Warfarin (Coumadin®)

* Problems that can occur.

Open for a list of important drug interactions.

- Take all medications with at least several swallows of water and stand or sit upright if possible. This will help move medicines to the stomach, and decrease throat irritation from the medicines.
- Notify your doctor for recent or sudden weight loss or a lengthy period of vomiting or diarrhea.
- These symptoms may be caused by a medicine. More importantly, doses of your medicines may have to be changed if you have lost weight or become dehydrated. An example of this is metformin (Glucophage™).
- Tell your doctor and pharmacist about any over-the-counter (OTC), herbal, natural, or homeopathic products or nutritional supplements you are taking. These can interact with your medicines.
- Just because a product is "over-the-counter" or "natural" does not mean it is totally safe. Follow package instructions and warnings carefully.

How can I prevent problems with my medications?



Adverse reactions to medicines and interactions of medicines can be serious and lead to hospital admissions. Being well-informed about your medicines can prevent many of these reactions. An adverse drug reaction is an unwanted effect caused by a medicine, such as nausea or a bad taste in your mouth. Most reactions are minor, but some can be serious. Some drugs affect seniors more than younger people. A drug interaction happens when one drug changes how another drug behaves in the body, causing increased or decreased effects of at least one of the drugs.

Preventing Drug Interactions and Side Effects in Seniors



Carolinas Poison Center's Medication Assistance Program (MAP) receives funding through a grant from the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF)



Carolinas Poison Center

1-800-222-1222

Important Drug - Drug Interactions

If you are taking:	Ask your doctor or pharmacist before taking:	Problems that can occur
Alprazolam (Xanax [®]) Triazolam (Halcion [®])	Fluconazole (Diflucan [®]) Itraconazole (Sporanox [®]) Ketoconazole (Nizoral [®])	Increased drowsiness
Carbamazepine (Tegretol [®])	Propoxyphene (Darvocet [®] , Darvon [®])	Carbamazepine toxicity (headache, vomiting, increased drowsiness, seizures, coma)
Dextromethorphan (many over-the-counter cough medicines)	Phenelzine (Nardil [®]) Selegiline (Eldepryl [®] , Emsam [®]) Tranlycypromine (Parnate [®])	Increased temperature, increased blood pressure, abnormal muscle movements
Digoxin (Lanoxin [®])	Clarithromycin (Biaxin [®])	Digoxin toxicity (abnormal heart rhythms, nausea, vomiting)
Dihydroergotamine (Migranal [®]) Ergotamine (Ergomar [®]) Methylsergide (Sansert [®])	Clarithromycin (Biaxin [®]) Erythromycin (EES [®] , Ery-tab [®] others)	Ergot toxicity (nausea, vomiting, blood vessel spasms)
Estrogen (Premarin, PremPro [®] , others)	Rifampin (Rifadin [®])	Decreased effects of estrogen
Ganciclovir (Cytovene [®])	Zidovudine (Retrovir [®])	Anemia (decreased amounts of red or white blood cells)
Phenelzine (Nardil [®]) Selegiline (Eldepryl [®] , Emsam [®]) Tranlycypromine (Parnate [®])	Dextroamphetamine (Adderall [®] , Dexedrine [®]) Phentermine (Ionamin [®] , ProFast [®]) Diethylpropion (Tenuate [®]) Sibutramine (Meridia [®])	Severe increased blood pressure, increased temperature, abnormal muscle movements, agitation
Phenelzine (Nardil [®]) Selegiline (Eldepryl [®] , Emsam [®]) Tranlycypromine (Parnate [®])	Levodopa/Carbidopa (Sinemet [®]) Pseudoephedrine (Sudafed [®])	Increased blood pressure, headache
Meperidine (Demerol [®])	Phenelzine (Nardil [®] ,) Selegiline (Eldepryl [®] , Emsam [®] ,) Tranlycypromine (Parnate [®] ,)	Increased blood pressure, increased temperature, abnormal muscle movements, agitation
Methotrexate (Trexall [®])	Trimethoprim (Bactrim [®] , Septra, Trimplex [®])	Severe anemia (decreased white and red blood cell counts), and problems making new blood cells
Isosorbide (Isordil [®] , Imdur [®] , ISMO [®] , others) Nitroglycerin	Sildenafil (Viagra [®]) Tadalafil (Cialis [®]) Vardenafil (Levitra [®])	Decreased blood pressure, lightheadedness
Pimozide (Orap [®])	Clarithromycin (Biaxin [®]) Erythromycin (EES [®] , EryTab [®]) Fluconazole (Diflucan [®]) Itraconazole (Sporanox [®]) Ketoconazole (Nizoral [®])	Severe abnormal heart rhythms
Citalopram (Celexa [®]) Fluoxetine (Prozac [®]) Fluvoxamine (Luvox [®]) Paroxetine (Paxil [®]) Sertraline (Zoloft [®]) Venlafaxine (Effexor [®])	Phenelzine (Nardil [®]) Selegiline (Eldepryl [®] , Emsam [®]) Tranlycypromine (Parnate [®])	Increased blood pressure, increased temperature, abnormal muscle movements, agitation
Theophylline (TheoDur [®])	Ciprofloxacin (Cipro [®]) Fluvoxamine (Luvox [®])	Theophylline toxicity (nausea, vomiting, palpitations, seizures)
Azathioprine (Imuran [®]) Mercaptopurine (Purinethol [®])	Allopurinol (Zyloprim [®])	Nausea, vomiting, anemia (decreased amounts of white and red blood cells)
Warfarin (Coumadin [®])	Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs): Celecoxib (Celebrex [®]) Diclofenac (Voltaren, Ibuprofen (Motrin [®] , Advil [®]) Ketoprofen (Orudis [®]) Ketorolac (Toradol [®]) Naproxen (Naprosyn [®] , Aleve [®])	Increased risk of bleeding
Warfarin (Coumadin [®])	Cimetidine (Tagamet) Fenofibrate (Tricor [®]) Gemfibrozil (Lopid [®]) Thyroid hormones	Increased risk of bleeding
Warfarin (Coumadin [®])	Butabarbital (Fioricet [®]) Phenobarbital	Decreased effects of warfarin

*Brand names listed here are the most commonly used. Your medication may be the generic name or another brand.
Please check both names of your medications.

Adapted from: Malone D, Abarca J, Hansten P, et al: Identification of Serious Drug-Drug Interactions: Results of the Partnership to Prevent Drug-Drug Interactions. Am J Ger Pharm 2005; 3(2): 65-75.