Drugs that Can Kill You

The idea of overdosing usually brings illegal drugs to mind, but that's not always the case. The danger of overdosing on common medicines is all too real — and still comes with the same deadly side effects as illegal drugs do.

If these medicines are lurking in your cabinet, make sure you are following the suggested dosages to avoid severe injury or even death.

1. Xanax (Alprazolam)

Benzodiazepines include Valium and Zanax that helps treat anxiety. Anxiety can contribute to an inability to be relaxed and in some cases, substance use disorders. Deaths by Alprazolam were at 4,237 in 2014, rising to 6,209 in 2016. Additionally, some Xanax deaths included Fentanyl (28.3%), Heroin (26.9%) and Oxycodone (25.3%). The majority of deaths by Xanax were unintentional; however, some individuals have used Xanax to assist in suicidal actions.

Some of the most common side effects some feel with taking Alprazolam range from confusion, decreased heart rate and comas. When individuals combine Alprazolam when substances like Heroin, Methadone, or alcohol, there is a greater risk of a fatal overdose.

2. Midol

Your menstrual cycle usually comes with serious cravings and a bottle of Midol to make your week of torture less painful, right? Be careful. Like other painkillers on this list, Midol contains Acetaminophen (APAP) which helps relieve your pain, however, APAP is also easy to overdose on. Midol can cause liver failure or even death if you overdose on these small pills.

Take only the recommended dose and don't take other pills that contain APAP. Initial signs of an APAP overdose include loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, sweating and confusion or weakness.

3. Tylenol

Tylenol offers the same risk as Midol, which is Acetaminophen. In normal doses, the drug is eliminated in the urine, but some of it is turned into a byproduct that's deadly to your liver. The harmful by-product is N-acetyl-p-benzoquinoneimine). If you take too much, your liver can't keep up and starts to fail. Doctors recommend only taking 3,000 milligrams of APAP in a 24-hour period.

What is tricky is how many other drugs contain APAP. If you take Tylenol for your cold, and then Midol for your period cramps, you'll pass the recommended dosage. Deadly combinations are all too easy to make, so double check your labels and be certain you aren't taking too much APAP.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) liver damage facts

- Liver damage from acetaminophen, which can be severe, can result either from an overdose or from regular doses that are taken while drinking alcohol.

Medications known to interact with acetaminophen

Most common drug ingredient in the U.S. and is found in more than 600 combination formulas, including Alka-Seltzer Plus Cold formula and the drug Percocet.

A**cetaminophen and aspirin:** Avoid drinking alcohol. It may increase your risk of stomach bleeding or liver damage.

Acetaminophen and topical Lidocaine (prilocaine) AgonEaze:

Lidocaine topical can cause a condition called methemoglobinemia that reduces the oxygen-carrying capacity of the red blood cells to different organs, and combining the medication with acetaminophen may increase the risk.

Acetaminophen and Citanest Forte: methemoglobinemia - combining the medication with acetaminophen may increase the risk.

A**cetaminophen and DermacinRx Prizopak (lidocaine/prilocaine topical):** methemoglobinemia - combining the medication with acetaminophen may increase the risk.

Avoid use of acetaminophen with any other cold or allergy medication (Benadryl- diphenhydramine; reduces the natural chemical histamine in the body), pain, or sleep medication that have acetaminophen as an ingredient.

4. Advil

Advil and other ibuprofen-like drugs are NSAIDS — nonsterodial anti-inflammatory drugs which can cause death and serious gastrointestinal bleeding and ulcers if not taken as directed. NSAID drugs hospitalize over 100,000 people and kill 16,500 in the US each year due to overdoses, wrongful combinations, or incorrect usage (not taking pills with a little food or milk, etc). The most important thing to keep in mind is to carefully manage your pain in the safest way possible. If you find that yoga or a hot soak relieves you headache, do that instead of popping pills. Consult with your pharmacist and your doctor to carefully coordinate your pain management regime and make sure medications aren't conflicting.
Much chronic joint pains are due to adulterated omega 6 oils. Also most chronic pain patients have underactive thyroids.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs): ginkgo, garlic, ginger, bilberry, dong quai, feverfew, ginseng, turmeric, meadowsweet and willow), with those containing coumarin cinnamon (Ceylon vs. Cassia).

5. Epsom salts
Perfect for a soothing baths; epsom salts are also used as a natural laxative because they contain magnesium sulfate. Dissolving epsom salts in water to use as a laxative is approved by the FDA, but epsom salts can cause some serious side effects. A high dose can rupture your intestinal wall, cause infection and/or react dangerously to other ingredients you ingest (such as coffee or herbs). Always consult with your doctor before trying any treatment, even one so seemingly harmless as epsom salts.

6. Cough syrup
Along with other cold medicines that contain Dextromethorphan (DXM), cough syrup doesn't have any serious side effects when taken as directed, but extreme doses of this medication can cause a sort of hallucinogenic state; making it a popular and cheap way for teens to get high. Teens are extracting the DXM from the syrups to take as a powder or pills, which is making overdosing on cold medicine much more common.

Beta Blockers: These drugs have been used for more than 30 years to treat high blood pressure, and they are recommended as the first line of defense in both the United States and international health guidelines.

However, it's being increasingly suggested that beta blockers are not a good choice for high blood pressure at all. Aside from often being ineffective, they're known to cause an array of serious side effects including:
• Stroke
• Heart attack
• Type 2 diabetes
• Fatigue, dizziness and weakness
• Sexual dysfunction
• Slow heartbeat and shortness of breath
• Trouble sleeping

One review published last year in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology even concluded that "there is a paucity of data or absence of

evidence to support use of beta-blockers as … first-line agents [for high blood pressure]."

"Given the increased risk of stroke, their "pseudo-antihypertensive" efficacy … lack of effect on regression of target end organ effects … and numerous adverse effects, the risk benefit ratio for beta-blockers is not acceptable for this indication."

People who receive blood-pressure-lowering drugs known as beta blockers shortly before, and after, having non-cardiac surgery are at higher risk of dying or having a stroke.

High Blood Pressure Can be Treated Without Drugs

- Surgery increases your heart's need for oxygen, and beta blockers are commonly given to help reduce blood pressure and heart rate, thereby reducing strain on the heart.
- In the study of over 8,300 people, participants were randomly assigned to receive a beta blocker two to four hours before surgery, as well as for 30 days after the procedure, or a placebo.

- Compared to those given a placebo, those who received beta blockers were 27 percent less likely to have a heart attack. However, they also had a **33 percent increased risk of dying, and double the risk of stroke.**

- An estimated 100 million people have major non-cardiac surgery each year, so the finding could have serious consequences. Even if only 10 percent of patients undergoing non-cardiac surgery were given beta blockers, that would mean that 800,000 people died unnecessarily in the past decade.

The Harvard Health Letter even recently named high blood pressure as one of seven common conditions that can be managed without medication.

It's worth mentioning also to make sure your blood pressure really is high before you start worrying about it. Blood pressures are extremely variable, and all of the following can cause you to have a false high reading:

- Emotional stress
- Smoking
- Coffee
- Over-the-counter drugs containing caffeine
- Decongestants
- A cold room
- A full bladder
- Improper cuff size or arm position

7 Ways To Lower Blood Pressure Without Medication

• **Exercise!** Regular exercise is great for your overall well-being, and it can also help with lowering your BP. Regular exercise keeps your heart strong and healthy. Plus, it's a natural stress reliever, and stress is a common cause of high blood pressure.

• **Change your diet.** Diets high in fatty, sodium-rich foods are detrimental to your blood pressure. Choose diets high in fruits and vegetables, lean meats, high fiber and whole grains.

• **Maintain your weight.** Watching your weight and maintaining a healthy weight for your body will reduce the amount of strain on your heart, and help regulate BP.

• **Limit sodium intake and increase potassium.** Sodium occurs naturally in many foods, but most processed food contains added sodium. Look for food items with low or no sodium to reduce overall intake and help lower HPB. **Foods high in potassium:** Potatoes, Legumes (white beans, adzuki beans, salmon, mackerel, halibut, tuna and snapper, kale, spinach, tomatoes, bananas, avocadoes, Cantaloupe, dates, nectarines and oranges).

• **Lower your stress levels.** You can work to reduce stress levels through meditation, finding an enjoyable hobby, exercising, or anything else that helps you relax.
• **Limit your alcohol intake**. Drinking excessive amounts of alcohol can raise your BP, so watch your consumption if you drink.
• **Stop Smoking.** Smoking cessation isn't just good for lowering BP; it offers many additional health benefits such as healthier lungs and a lower chance of developing heart disease.

The Most Deadly Drug Combinations

Benzodiazepine and Opioids

One of the most popular, and most deadly, drug combinations is benzodiazepines (Valium and Zanax) and opioids. This mixture of substances is so common and so dangerous that more than 30% of opioid overdoses also involve the use of benzodiazepines. Moreover, 10,724 people died from an opioid and benzodiazepine overdose in 2018.

While benzodiazepines are prescribed to treat anxiety and seizure disorders, opioids, such as Oxycodone, Percocet, Morphine, and Hydrocodone, are prescribed to treat acute and chronic pain. Both drugs are depressants that are sometimes prescribed simultaneously. However, people who combine these two drugs place themselves at a higher risk of drug-related emergencies or accidental overdose. When taken together, this deadly drug combination suppresses breathing, promotes sleep, decreases inhibitions, leads to short term memory loss, and difficulty making decisions. If a person takes too many benzos or opioids, they run the risk of losing consciousness and overdosing.

Overdose from benzodiazepines and opioids can occur suddenly and usually comes in the form of losing consciousness and becoming

unresponsive. If medical attention isn't provided quickly, these overdoses can turn fatal in the blink of an eye.

Alcohol and Benzodiazepines

Benzodiazepines, like Xanax, Valium, or Klonopin, and alcohol are both depressants that suppress the central nervous system (CNS), thereby slowing heart rate, breathing, blood pressure, and more. Since both of these substances are CNS depressants, the effects of these drugs are compounded when people mix alcohol with benzodiazepines. To explain, alcohol lowers inhibitions and decision-making abilities. Benzodiazepines, on the other hand, produce similar effects. When people mix these two dangerous substances, they are likely to experience poor coordination, drowsiness, trouble making decisions, memory loss, respiratory depression, or overdose. Ultimately, when combining alcohol and benzos, people become more intoxicated faster without having to drink as much as they normally would.

Moreover, benzodiazepines are known to cause short-term memory loss. When combined with alcohol, this memory loss becomes more severe. As a result, individuals may forget how many pills they have taken, how many drinks they have had, or other important details. In addition to the physical health risks associated with combining these two deadly drugs, mixing alcohol and benzodiazepines puts individuals at risk of accidental injury, illegal actions, and risky behaviors.

Lastly, when mixing these two drugs it's hard to regulate how intoxicated a person is becoming. As a result, the risk of overdose increases dramatically. In the event of an alcohol and benzodiazepine overdose, medical attention should be sought immediately as overdose can be fatal.

High Fructose Corn Syrup

Consumption of beverages containing fructose rose 135 percent between 1977 and 2001. Food and beverage manufacturers began switching their sweeteners from sucrose (table sugar) to corn syrup in the 1970s when they discovered that HFCS was not only cheaper to make, it was also sweeter, a switch that has drastically altered the American diet.

Of all the foods capable of inflicting harm in your body, HFCS is one of the most detrimental.
Fructose is virtually identical to alcohol in the damage that it can do to your body… and your liver. Fructose can only be metabolized by the liver, because the liver is the only organ that has the transporter GLUT5 for it. Fructose is metabolized directly into fat – not cellular energy, like glucose. Fructose is addictive, dangerous, and deadly. The corn that the high fructose corn syrup is metabolized from nearly all comes from genetically modified corn.

High fructose corn syrup (HFCS), is a MAJOR factor in the increasing rates of obesity and chronic diseases all over the world. Restrict your fructose consumption to about 15 to 25 grams (.5 to .9 of an ounce) of fructose per day from all sources.

Appalling Facts About Fructose

Fructose is a sweetener usually derived from corn, and is now the single largest calorie source of Americans. Fifty-five percent of sweeteners used by food and beverage manufacturers today are made from HFCS, because it's cheaper and 20 percent sweeter than regular table sugar (sucrose). In fact, the number one source of calories in the United States today is soda, which is sweetened with large HFCS amounts.

It is unsurprising that an average American now consumes roughly 47 pounds of cane sugar and 35 pounds of high-fructose corn syrup every year.

Fructose is a potent pro-inflammatory agent that speeds up the aging process. Fructose also leads to insulin resistance and the growth of fat cells around your vital organs, which are risk factors of chronic diseases.

Wide array of health conditions that fructose is linked to:

- Insulin resistance, liver damage, and obesity
- Elevated blood pressure
- Elevated triglycerides and LDL (bad) cholesterol
- Depletion of vitamins and minerals
- Cardiovascular disease, liver disease, cancer, arthritis, and gout
- Dementia,

The sad truth: not everyone is aware that fructose is present in most processed foods and fast foods, even in those that have been touted "sugar-free" or “low-calorie"!

Fructose is one of the most pervasive ingredients used in various foods today – it hides in almost all processed foods, from pretzels, bologna, cheese spread, and baked goods, to condiments like Worcestershire sauce.

Even infant formulas now contain as much sugar as one can of soda – meaning, babies just a few months old are already being fed this toxic substance.

When mfg remove fat from foods like salad dressings what do you think they replace it with. Sugar.

Condiments, Salad Dressings, and Sauces: Mfg. has succeeded in changing the name of a form of HFCS (42 or 55 percent fructose), called HFCS-90 (contains 90 percent) to fructose or fructose syrup. Syrups with 90% fructose will not state high fructose corn syrup on the label, they will state 'fructose' or 'fructose syrup.'"

Big Food is taking advantage: General Mills' Vanilla Chex cereal you're buying may say "no high fructose corn syrup" on the front of the box, but HFCS will be hidden in the ingredients list under the name fructose, which is the most concentrated form of HFCS.

What about the FDA? They declined to recognize HFCS-90 as safe, so why aren't they taking action?

Due to budget reasons and long product review times, the FDA decided in 1997 that food companies could review their own products and determine if they were safe or not. This self-regulatory system legally enables food companies to put profits above safety.

Here are a few other deceptive names of HFCS that you should look out for: maize syrup, glucose syrup, glucose/fructose syrup, tapioca syrup, fruit fructose and crystalline fructose.

12 Best Foods for Your Liver

1. **Fermented foods:** Fermented foods like cultured vegetables provide your body with beneficial bacteria that aid in digestion and provide detoxification support. The fermented food kimchi, for instance, has been found to help your body break down pesticides.
2. **Cruciferous vegetables** (broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, bok choy, and daikon): These help your liver neutralize toxins, including chemicals, pesticides, medications, and carcinogens.
3. **Dark green leafy vegetables** (kale, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, and dandelion greens): These contain rich amounts of sulfur, which helps your liver with detoxification. Dandelion greens in particular are known for supporting liver detoxification and health.
4. **Sea vegetables:** Various types of seaweed and brown algae also support detoxification and may also help prevent your body from absorbing heavy metals and other environmental toxins. Be sure the sea vegetables come from a non-polluted water source.
5. **Sprouts:** Sprouts contain high levels of enzymes that serve as catalysts for important body functions. Recent research suggests that broccoli sprouts may help your body detox environmental pollutants such as benzene. From my perspective, broccoli, watercress, and sunflower sprouts are foods that virtually everyone can and would benefit from growing.
6. **Garlic, onions, shallots, and leeks:** These foods are rich in sulfur, including the sulfur-based compound allicin, which is critical for liver detoxification.
7. **Organic, pastured eggs:** Eggs are a high-quality source of protein that includes all eight essential amino acids. Your liver needs these to help

detoxify your body. Choline, found in egg yolks, also helps protect your liver from toxins.

8. **Artichokes:** These contain cynarin and silymarin (milk thistle), which support liver health.
9. **Mushrooms:** Maitake, shiitake, and reishi mushrooms are known for their potent immuno supportive agents and also contain L-ergothioneine, a powerful antioxidant to help neutralize free radicals.
10. **Coconut oil:** This healthy saturated fat is so easy for your body to digest that no pancreatic fat-digesting enzymes are needed. This puts less stress on your liver and helps it function optimally.
11. **Avocados:** These contain healthy monounsaturated fat, oleic acid, and glutathione, which is important for liver health.
12. **Herbs:** Many herbs support liver detoxification and function. This includes ginger, cumin, coriander, cardamom, cayenne pepper, cinnamon, fennel, and turmeric (curcumin).

Mistakes are the portals of discovery.

James Joyce

KINDNESS

Remember there's no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end.

Scott Adams