



Are Your Medications Affecting Your Hearing?

Know the Facts

Some medications, even those prescribed by your doctor, may affect your hearing or balance. Side effects from medications may be related to dosage or from interactions with other medications you are taking, and can vary from individual to individual. Please consult your ear, nose and throat (ENT) specialist if you have concerns about the hearing-related side effects (ototoxicity) of medications you are taking.

Salicylates

- ❖ Acetaminophen
- ❖ Aspirin

Compounds containing aspirin may cause hearing problems in high doses (20-30 tablets per day), though this is reversible.

Anti-inflammatory Agents

Problems seen in patients with sensitivity, symptoms reversible

- ❖ Ibuprofen (propionic acids)
- ❖ Pyrazolones
- ❖ Ascectic acids

Pain Medications

- ❖ Hydrocodone in combination with acetaminophen

This combination medication is distributed as a prescription painkiller under various names including the brands Vicodin[®], Hydrocet[®], Lorcet[®], Norco[®] and their generic counterparts. Hearing problems have been seen in individuals who take between 20 –100 tablets per day. This overuse can cause irreversible and total hearing loss.

Cinchona Alkaloids

Minimum risk, usually temporary and reversible

- ❖ Quinidine
- ❖ Chloroquine
- ❖ Quinine (Q-vel[®])

Loop Diuretics

- ❖ Ethacrynic Acid (Edecrin[®])
- ❖ Furosemide (Lasix[®])
- ❖ Bumetanide (Bumex[®])
- ❖ Torsemide (Dermadex[®])
- ❖ Acetazolamide
- ❖ Mannitol (given only by IV)

Aminoglycosides

Listed in order of toxicity, these drugs are given only by IV/injection, not orally. They can affect either hearing, balance or both.

- ❖ Neomycin
- ❖ Streptomycin
- ❖ Kanamycin
- ❖ Amikacin, Gentamicin
- ❖ Tobramycin
- ❖ Netilmicin
- ❖ Rinostamycin
- ❖ Dihydrostreptomycin

Antineoplastics

Cancer chemotherapy

- ❖ Alpha-Difluoromethylornithine (DFMO[®])
- ❖ Cis-Platin (Platinol[®])
- ❖ Carboplatin
- ❖ Bleomycin
- ❖ Vincristine
- ❖ Nitrogen Mustard
- ❖ Vinblastine