

## **Splurge** - Volume 7 Issue 9 (September 2012)

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### **MEDICATION IS DRIVING ME CRAZY!**

Patients often come to their doctor's office having solved one problem but are going crazy by one side effect or another. Some people are on multiple medications so it often seems hard for them to tell which drug is causing what. Many people think that just because a medication is over the counter or not something they use every day that they couldn't possibly be affected by it.

Surprise! Not true. Even aspirin has properties that may cause problems if not carefully taken. Below I list some of the more common side effects that patients run into. Please note that not all patients experience these and there are always uncommon side effects that can occur as well.

More than 10 million people on these drugs; about 29% have these symptoms:

#### Statin drugs (cholesterol-lowering)

- Generalized muscle pain, especially in legs and lower back
- Muscle weakness, stiffness and fatigue
- May experience arm or shoulder pain

#### ACE inhibitor drugs (blood pressure-lowering)

- Chronic coughing is the most common side effect
- May cause runny nose, sinusitis, tickling in the throat
- Common cause of falling, particularly when getting up at night to go to the bathroom
- Common cause of dizziness, particularly when changing position
- Most dangerous side effect is an abrupt drop in blood pressure on standing or rising

#### ARB, or angiotensin receptor inhibitors (treat high blood pressure)

- Fewer side effects than ACE inhibitors but similar to the above
- May cause cough or sinusitis

#### Calcium channel blockers

- Swollen feet
- May also cause flushing and dizziness

#### Antidepressant drugs - SSRI's (the most commonly prescribed) may cause:

- Weight gain
- High blood pressure
- Fatigue
- Sleeping difficulties

- Dizziness
- Withdrawal symptoms
- Sexual difficulties

#### Diuretics (for high blood pressure)

- May cause potassium loss
- Muscle cramps
- Cardiac arrhythmia's

#### Aspirin

- May cause bleeding
- May cause stomach irritation and bleeding

#### Estrogen supplements

- Weight gain
- High blood pressure
- Increased risk of some kind of cancer

#### Beta blockers (high blood pressure)

- Fatigue
- Insomnia
- Decreased libido
- Nightmares
- Leg pain
- Increased sweating

#### NSAIDS

- Stomach inflammation
- Bleeding
- Increased incidence of heart attack and stroke
- May also cause weight gain and increased blood pressure

By no means is this an exhaustive list, but if you are going crazy trying to figure out what's wrong with you, the answer may be on this list. Often just knowing that these symptoms have a cause helps patients alter their behavior or helps the doctor come up with a solutions.

Always be sure to speak with your physician before changing or stopping medication, or if any side effects are worsening. For those who see several doctors for various ailments, make sure you let them know what medications you're taking and for what reason. This will help decrease the chances for contra-indicated prescriptions and more proper diagnoses.

If you're undergoing surgery (including dental or plastic surgeries), it's imperative that you talk to your surgeon beforehand about what medications you take – even the occasional aspirin or antacid can be something your doctor needs to know in order for you to have your best result.

Listen to Dr. Galichia's Radio Show – "Take Your Health to Heart" every Saturday from 11 AM to Noon on 1480 KQAM in Wichita. If you have any medically related questions, please call us during the LIVE broadcast at 1-800-TALK-997 or 1-800-825-5997. You can also e-mail your questions anytime to

[GalichiaRadio@Galichia.com](mailto:GalichiaRadio@Galichia.com). We would love to hear from you!!!

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