

## When Prescribing NSAIDs...



USE THE  
LOWEST  
EFFECTIVE  
DOSE



FOR THE  
SHORTEST  
PERIOD OF  
TIME

# APPROPRIATE NSAID USE: A PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN

The management of pain and inflammation—whether acute or chronic—requires proper consideration and attention to individual patients' therapeutic needs and the issues that may affect appropriate and effective treatment. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), whether over the counter (OTC) or by prescription, are some of the most commonly used and effective drugs for pain relief, but, like any medication, only appropriate use can maximize their therapeutic benefit while minimizing risk.<sup>1,2</sup>

Unfortunately, prescription and OTC NSAID use often falls outside of explicit but simple guidance. The US Food and Drug Administration, European Medicines Agency, and numerous medical societies recommend their use at the lowest effective dose for the shortest period of time required to provide therapeutic effect.<sup>3</sup>

Data demonstrate an unequivocal relationship between dose and duration of NSAID use and the increased risk of gastrointestinal, renal, and cardiovascular adverse events.<sup>4</sup> Only by following guidance for use, taking patients' clinical needs and risk factors into account, fully understanding what medications patients may be taking, educating them about what NSAIDs are, and facilitating an ongoing dialogue can we maximize the therapeutic benefits of NSAIDs, minimize the likelihood of adverse events, and prevent patients from living in pain due to fear of pain medications.

The Alliance for Rational Use of NSAIDs—a public health coalition—aims to bridge the gap between guidance and clinical practice, educating health care professionals and the public at-large to ensure appropriate and safe use of NSAIDs.

**Please join us in our efforts to ensure appropriate and safe relief for people with pain. To download educational materials and learn more about the Alliance for Rational Use of NSAIDs, visit [www.NSAIDAlliance.com](http://www.NSAIDAlliance.com).**

### Bill McCarberg, MD

Chairman, Alliance for Rational Use of NSAIDs  
President, Western Pain Society

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