

Important Facts about Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)

- NSAIDs are among the most commonly used medications in the United States. Health care professionals must ensure that patients are properly educated and empowered to use this category of prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs safely and appropriately.
 - In 2012, more than 98 million NSAID prescriptions were filled¹
 - Approximately 23 million Americans use OTC NSAID medications daily²
 - As the American population ages, conditions that require NSAID use, such as pain and inflammation, are likely to increase
 - The shift away from opioids for safety reasons is expected to increase NSAID use
- When used as directed, NSAIDs are safe and proven effective for reducing pain and inflammation but, like any medication, may have side effects.
 - Significant dose and duration-dependent gastrointestinal, renal and cardiovascular adverse events (AEs) can occur with both selective and nonselective NSAIDs³
 - In the U.S., it is estimated that gastrointestinal complications caused by NSAIDs result in more than 100,000 hospitalizations and 16,500 deaths annually⁴
 - According to the American College of Gastroenterology, NSAID use is the second major cause of stomach ulcers
 - Multiple studies have raised concern about the cardiovascular safety of NSAIDs, especially the selective cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2) inhibitors, which have been linked to an increased cardiovascular risk⁵
 - As more NSAIDs are taken over longer periods of time, the risk of adverse events increases⁶
- A gap exists between NSAID guidance and use. Many patients and consumers are unfamiliar with the term NSAIDs or which products contain NSAIDs, therefore there may be overlap in prescription and OTC use.
- Educating patients on the appropriate and safe use of NSAIDs will:
 - Maximize the therapeutic benefit of NSAIDs
 - Minimize the likelihood of AE occurrences
 - Prevent the under treatment of painful conditions
- To guide appropriate use, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Alliance for Rational Use of NSAIDs, along with medical societies strongly recommend that:

Any NSAID should be used at the lowest effective dose for the shortest duration of time required for relief while taking into account patient-specific risk factors and clinical needs



Alliance for Rational Use of NSAIDs

A Public Health Coalition



For more information on the appropriate and safe use of NSAID therapy, visit
www.NSAIDAlliance.com.

¹ IMS 2012

² Wilcox CM, Cryer B, Triadafilopoulos G. Patterns of use and public perception of over-the-counter pain relievers: focus on nonsteroidal antiinflammatory drugs. *J Rheumatol*. 2005;32:2218-2224.

³ *Ibid*.

⁴ Wolfe MM, Lichtenstein DR, Singh G. Gastrointestinal toxicity of nonsteroidal antiinflammatory drugs. *N Engl J Med*. 1999;340:1888-99.

⁵ Brophy JM, Levesque LE, Zhang B. The coronary risk of cyclo-oxygenase-2 inhibitors in patients with a previous myocardial infarction. *Heart (Br Cardiac Society)*. 2007;93:189-194.

⁶ Bijlsma JW, Boers M, Saag KG, Furst DE. Glucocorticoids in the treatment of early and late RA. *Ann Rheum Dis*. 2003;62:1033-1037.