

## 10 Drugs You *Should Never Take!*

We're in the age of "conveyor-belt medicine." The mainstream medical system is set up to allow your doctor just enough time to give you a quick diagnosis followed by a prescription or a needless procedure. Rarely does it allow you the time to discuss much of anything that could give you a true foundation for good health, such as dietary changes, appropriate exercises and healthy weight-loss goals. Profit-bloated drug companies are at the helm of our healthcare system. They exist to serve their bottom lines—not your health needs. They're vested in you *staying* sick.

Offering cutting edge alternatives to health and wellness is what HSI is all about...but even more than that, it's the *right thing to do*. Unlike drug companies, whose sole concern is financial gain at the expense of the folks they're supposed to be helping, our mission is helping you stay as healthy as possible for as long as possible.

Our members come to us at their wits' end. Their relief is beyond measure when they hear that there are safer alternatives to the drugs they are struggling with—physically and financially.

Now, we'd like to share with you the same advice we give to our members—starting with the 10 drugs you should avoid and the reasons why.

### 1) **Statins**

A lot of attention is paid to lowering LDL "bad" cholesterol with drugs such as Lipitor, the statin that has been associated with the highest risk of adverse reactions. These side effects include severe muscle breakdown, decreased cognitive function and erectile dysfunction.

Better to pay attention to your triglyceride levels anyway. They may matter at least as much as the cholesterol levels your doctor is likely always nagging you about. In fact, if you get your triglyceride levels down below 2.0 mmol/l, your LDL cholesterol will mostly be made up of large, fluffy particles, which are less likely to penetrate the walls of your arteries and cause plaque build-up and blockage.

To lower your levels, cut back on the junky, processed high-glycemic carbs. And a safe alternative to statins would be omega-3 fats from fish oil (3 grams total EPA plus DHA daily), which can bring down even the higher levels above 7.75 significantly.

### 2) **Weight-loss pills**

You want to lose weight, but you're being pushed to swallow a risky solution for the sake of a few kilos that are highly likely to be re-gained within a year. Why? You can't stay on weight-loss pills forever! Weight loss occurs with the loss of bad habits, replaced by newer, healthier ones. Not to mention, many of these weight-loss pills have been found to substantially raise blood pressure and heart rate.

There's one newer pill on the market, Alli, that can have what the drug company has coyly named

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“treatment effects.” Those include: “gas with oily spotting, loose stools, and more frequent stools *that may be hard to control.*”

Feeling alarmed yet? On top of that, these pills say you need to clean up your diet and exercise in order to see real results anyway. So why not just skip the dangerous, ineffective drugs and their “treatment effects” and go straight to the source of real weight loss: a whole foods diet and exercise. And watching your portions can make a big difference as well. Many people don’t realize how much they are eating until they begin to measure out their foods..

### **3) Treatments for irritable bowel syndrome**

Patients who take popular prescription meds such as Zelnorm and Lotronex for IBS gain only marginal benefit that comes with significant costs, including an increased risk of diarrhea, colitis, and obstructed or even ruptured bowels. These problems surfaced after U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval and were followed by the predictable drug-company spin control.

In the hands of an experienced gastroenterologist, these meds might be okay for a very small number of tough-to-treat cases. But only after he has done a proper nutritional evaluation and given you stress-reduction techniques. Otherwise, forget it.

The most natural treatment of all is adding more fiber to your diet. Many people *think* they’re getting enough, but are surprised when they start actually reading food labels—many of the foods they’re eating have less than one gram of fiber per serving. Reach for five grams per serving every chance you get when you choose breads and cereals.

### **4) Painkillers**

One of the worst problems with these pills is that they’re so addictive—and *very dangerous*. They’re now considered one of the leading causes of accidental death in the country. Meanwhile, these painkillers are handed out like candy for every conceivable ache and pain. Candy with serious side effects, like confusion, lethargy, dependence and respiratory depression, just to name a few.

The simple truth is that if your pain isn’t debilitating and it’s not chronic, then chances are you don’t need a painkiller such as prescription opioids (Vicodin or Oxycontin). And many times, even if it is chronic, you still don’t need a drug. When it comes to arthritis pain (which of course is usually chronic), we usually recommend fish oil (2 to 3 grams of total DHA and EPA daily) and a powerful botanical formulation called Zyflamend, from New Chapter (available from Whole Foods Vitamins, [www.whole-food-vitamins.net](http://www.whole-food-vitamins.net); or Better Health International, [www.betterhealthinternational.com](http://www.betterhealthinternational.com)).

Most cases of arthritis will respond to these two remedies without the need for prescription or even over-the-counter painkillers. As far as other types of pain, like lower back pain, shoulder and neck pain, and headaches, most will respond to physical therapy, chiropractic treatment, massage therapy, and osteopathic manipulation.

### **5) Antidepressants**

Over the past few years, there has been a huge increase in the use of serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) antidepressants (i.e. Zoloft, Paxil). Docs are quick to write prescriptions for these pills—even when all you may have is a case of the blues. What you’re getting is a prescription for weight gain, decreased sexual desire, and possibly even thoughts of suicide. Take action by trying the simplest remedies first: talk therapy, exercise, and cutting down on sugar and caffeine.

Rhodiola rosea (golden root) is an adaptogen that we've used successfully with patients for a number of years. Because it provides an overall balancing effect to the body, it can help normalize mood problems.

## **6) Diabetes drugs**

There are widely prescribed drugs for type-2 diabetes, such as Actos and Avandia, which work by increasing your body's insulin sensitivity. Unfortunately, they also tend to cause weight gain. Worse, they can exacerbate or even cause heart failure, along with accumulation of fluid in the legs, ankles and lungs. In some extreme cases, even liver failure can occur.

Type-2 diabetes is heavily influenced by lifestyle. One of the best ways to keep your glucose levels stable is to use the Glycemic Index as a guide when planning your meals. It will make you re-think overly processed foods that don't provide good nutrition or any health benefits. Start pairing foods that will work together to manage your glucose levels for you—like spreading real butter on your roll at dinner. Healthy fats and proteins can make some of your favorite “taboo” foods work for you rather than against you—no drugs necessary.

## **7) Sleeping pills**

Here's news for you: insomnia isn't caused by a sleeping-pill deficiency. But, you can't watch your favorite TV show anymore without seeing some commercial pushing Big Pharma's new sleeping pill of choice. (Stilnox, Lunesta and Rozerem are some of the popular brands on the market now.) And I'm sure you've seen the news stories of folks sleep-driving. Dizziness and being a little unsteady on your feet are also common side effects of these “sleep aids”—and the last thing you need is to risk a dangerous, hip-fracturing fall in the quest for some quality rest.

Luckily, most insomnia is behavioral—meaning you've just got some bad habits to turn around. Keep a sleep log to see patterns that you could tweak. Cut out all caffeine after lunch—or completely. (It'll take about two weeks to wean off.) Keep your bed for strictly nocturnal activities. And they do NOT include eating, watching TV, or reading the paper.

### **6 more tips for a good night's sleep**

1. Try eyeshades and super-light, molded, foam earplugs to reduce noise.
2. Use light-blocking shades on your windows.
3. Buy a white-noise machine or run an air cleaner to mask bothersome noises.
4. Try aromatherapy with essential oils. Lavender and wood rose are especially known for their calming effects.
5. Soak in a warm bath. Try a bath oil to help you relax.
6. Sipping a little warm milk or herbal tea can be a soothing ritual.

## **8) Bone-building drugs**

The FDA recently notified medical professionals that these “bone builders” (such as Fosamax, Actonel and Boniva) can cause excruciating bone and muscle pain. These pills are downright dangerous, with long-term use being linked to osteonecrosis—which means the bone dies, and it happens especially in the jaw. So much for bone *building*.

Osteoporosis is an over-treated condition—what docs should be looking at is your vitamin D level. This vitamin is more important than even calcium when it comes to protecting and building bones. Vitamin D (which is actually a hormone) improves the absorption of calcium and phosphorous, which are essential for healthy bones. It also helps your muscle coordination, improving your balance. Have your doc check your 25-hydroxy vitamin D level. You'll want it in a healthy 30+ range. To get it there, take 1,000 to 2,000 IUs of vitamin D per day.

### **9) Beta-blockers**

Sure, you need to control your blood pressure. But these pills, such as Lopressor and Inderal, may interfere with normal glucose metabolism and potentially increase your chances of developing diabetes. Our experience suggests that most cases of hypertension can be controlled with the effective and safe old stand-bys: weight loss, a good diet, and exercise. Why take a drug at all when you have natural options? Plus, you'll be lowering your risk of diabetes, too.

### **10) Anti-inflammatories**

Ibuprofen. Aspirin. You don't need a doc to write you a prescription for these—you can get them right over the counter. Which makes them all the more dangerous, because many people assume that makes them safe. Nope. They're just prescriptions that have come off of patent and are in lower doses. Of course, that just means a lot of people pop extra—and *risk their lives*.

Thousands of people die each year as a result of these seemingly benign pills, due to bleeding from their now-compromised protective mucosal layers in their stomachs and intestines. Long-term regular use can also damage the kidneys. A natural way to control inflammation is by getting omega-3 fats from fish oil—2 to 3 grams total EPA plus DHA daily. Also, try Zyflamend by New Chapter—a safe and effective botanical anti-inflammatory (available from Whole Foods Vitamins, [www.whole-food-vitamins.net](http://www.whole-food-vitamins.net); or Better Health International, [www.betterhealthinternational.com](http://www.betterhealthinternational.com)).

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