

Nutrition News

Information for Senior Citizens

Developed by Colorado State University Extension
Department of Food Science & Human Nutrition

What You Should Know About Drug-Nutrient Interactions

Over-the-counter and prescription drugs are used every day by millions of people. It is not uncommon for individuals to take eight different medications a day. Although drugs are certainly necessary, it is becoming increasingly more recognized that many drugs affect the way our bodies handle nutrients. Drugs can also affect the amount of food we eat by altering our sense of taste and smell. In terms of drug-nutrient interactions, drugs can:

- cause some vitamins and minerals to be removed faster from the body
- reduce the amount of nutrients that our bodies can absorb
- destroy certain vitamins
- cause bleeding from the digestive tract, thereby losing iron

It is therefore important that you ask a doctor or pharmacist the proper time and way to take your medication. Some medications should be taken at meal times; other medications should be taken between meals and some should be taken only with water.

Over-the-counter drugs (OTC) should be taken only temporarily. Be sure to check with your doctor or pharmacist before you use an OTC drug with any current prescriptions. Remember to read the label carefully before taking the drug because there may be important information regarding drug-nutrient interactions or interactions with other medications listed on the label.

For more information, see Colorado State University Extension's Fact Sheet 9.361 *Nutrient-Drug Interactions and Food*,
<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/PUBS/FOODN/UT/09361.html>

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Special Note for People with Diabetes

If you have diabetes, you need to be aware that certain medications may raise or lower your blood sugar (glucose) levels. Some medications contain sugar or alcohol.

Before taking any medication, it is important that you ask your doctor or pharmacist if the medication will affect your blood sugar and how it will interact with your other medications.

Medication	Nutrient(s) Involved	Mechanism
Allopurinol (Zyloprim)	Iron	Impaired absorption
Antacids containing magnesium and/or aluminum hydroxide	Phosphorus	Impaired absorption
Antibiotics	All nutrients	Decreased appetite, nutrients lost through diarrhea
Aspirin	Iron, Vitamin C, Folic acid, Vitamin K	Increased iron and vitamin C loss, competes with folic acid and vitamin K
Barbituates (Fiorinal, Butisol-sodium, Sodium butabarbital)	Vitamin C	Increased requirement
Cholesterol lowering medications (Questran)	Vitamins A, D, E, K and Folic acid	Decreased absorption
Cimetidine (Tagamet)	Iron	Impaired iron absorption
Corticosteroids (Solu-Medrol, Deltasone, Prednisone)	Calcium Vitamins B6 & C Potassium & Zinc	Decreased absorption and increased excretion
Digoxin (Lanoxin)	Zinc Thiamin	Increased excretion Increased requirement
Estrogen (Premarin)	Folic acid Vitamin B6 Vitamin C	Impaired absorption Increased requirement Increased breakdown
Indomethacin (Indocin)	Iron	(see aspirin)
Iron supplements	Vitamin E	Reduced absorption
Laxatives	Vitamins A, D, and K And Potassium	Impaired absorption
Phenobarbital (Donnatal)	Folic acid, Vitamin B12 Vitamins B6, D & K	Reduced absorption Increased requirement of vitamin B6 & breakdown of vitamins D & K
Phenytoin (Dilantin)	Vitamins K & D Folic acid	Increased breakdown Reduced absorption
Spirolactone (Aldactone, Aldactazide)	Calcium	Increased excretion
Thiazide diuretics (Aldoril, Diuril, Hygroton, Dyazide)	Potassium, Zinc, Magnesium, Iodine, Calcium	Increased excretion
Triamterene (Dyazide)	Calcium Folic acid	Increased excretion Impaired metabolism
Trimethoprim (Septra, Bactrim)	Folic acid	Inhibits utilization

Questions and Answers



Q: My appetite hasn't been great lately. Could it be drug related?

A: It might be. Certain medications may reduce your appetite. These medications include some cough medicines, antihistamines, caffeine-containing drugs, digitalis, amphetamines, antacids, and chemotherapy. (Other medications, on the other hand, may increase appetite.) If you have little desire to eat, try to consume smaller, more frequent meals.

Q: Are drug-nutrient interactions easy to identify?

A: No. It is often hard to detect a drug-nutrient interaction. It is a little easier to detect a drug-drug interaction. If you notice any changes in behavior or if you just don't feel good, please see your doctor. Write down every medication that you are currently taking and the amount you take.

Food Stamps:

To find out if you or someone you know qualifies for food stamps, call 1-800-221-5689.

Play It Safe

Here are a few tips to help you prevent an adverse drug reaction.

1. Talk to your doctor about your medications and concerns. Don't wait until the subject comes up.
2. Do not increase or decrease the amount of medication you are supposed to take.



3. Be careful when using over-the-counter medications. These medications can interact with your prescription drugs.

4. If you have more than one doctor, make sure you let both doctors know the types of medications you are taking. This will help both doctors get a better picture of your medications.

5. Don't take someone else's medication. You are unique. Therefore, your medicine should be tailored to you.

6. Make sure you understand your prescription. Do not be afraid to ask your doctor to clarify your prescription and to write it down.

7. If you have a family member or friend who takes medications, don't encourage them to self-prescribe medications or give them your medication. Encourage them to see their doctor for a regular check up. If they are physically disabled (hearing or seeing difficulties), you might want to accompany them to the doctor's office.

8. Drugs and alcohol do not mix. Please check with your doctor if you drink alcohol.



Chicken Salad

Ingredients

1/2 whole chicken, skinned and cooked
2 cups green grapes, sliced
1 stalk celery, sliced
1/4 green pepper, sliced
4 green onions, sliced
1 Tbsp chopped chives

1 Tbsp fresh parsley (1 tsp. dried)
8 ounces plain low-fat yogurt
1/2 cup low-fat cottage cheese
1/8 tsp paprika pepper
1/8 tsp celery salt (optional)

Directions

1. Cut chicken into bite-size pieces add grapes, celery, green pepper, green onions, chives, and parsley.
2. Stir in yogurt and cottage cheese and season to taste with paprika pepper and celery salt.
3. Chill and serve with rolls.

Yield: 4 Servings (324 calories, 5 grams of fat, 100 mg cholesterol per serving)

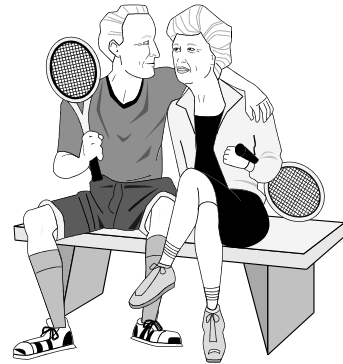
Grow Your Own Herbs!

Herbs are a fun and tasty way to season up your dishes! You can grow many herbs such as basil, parsley, chives, rosemary, and sage year round.

The easiest way to start your garden is to get store-bought plants or to transplant cuttings from a friend's garden. Growing herbs from seeds might be a little more challenging. For easy transport, grow your herbs in a pot. Make sure your garden gets about eight hours of sunlight a day. You should use your fresh herbs quickly. Store them in the refrigerator in a sealed plastic bag. If you can't use your herbs right away, dry or freeze them. Store your dried herbs in an airtight container.

Not sure how to cook with herbs, be creative! Basil, dill and chives go well with fish. Dill and rosemary go great with chicken--just refrigerate marinated skinless chicken filets overnight in a mixture of plain yogurt, buttermilk and dill. Dip in bread crumbs and bake! Spice up your salads with fresh herbs! The list is endless!

Exercise Corner



Activity Chart (for a 150-pound person)

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Calories per/hr</u>
sleeping	80
sitting	100
driving automobile	120
standing	140
biking (5 mph).....	210
walking (2-3 mph).....	210
gardening	220
golf, lawn mowing.....	250
swimming	300
walking (3-4 mph).....	300