

“Ten Things Patients Should Know” Series

DRUGS ASSOCIATED WITH OUTPATIENT MEDICATION ERRORS

1. **INSULIN** - A hormone made by the pancreas that controls the level of glucose in the blood. Insulin is used to treat diabetes. Signs of a potential overdose include seizures, weakness or vomiting.
2. **ANTICOAGULANTS** - Blood thinning medications that reduce coagulation of the blood (clotting) and can be useful in treating and preventing blood clots. An overdose can lead to bleeding complications.
3. **AMOXICILLIN** - A common antibiotic used to treat a wide variety of bacterial infections, including ear infections and pneumonia. Side effects can include vomiting, diarrhea, hives and seizures.
4. **ASPIRIN**- A drug used to treat minor aches and pains, fever, and headaches. It can also be used long term, in low doses, to prevent heart attacks, strokes and blood clots. Signs of a potential overdose include seizures, vomiting and hallucinations.
5. **TRIMETHOPRIM-SULFAMETHOXAZOLE**- A combination of the antibiotics trimethoprim and sulfamethoxazole (also called Bactrim and Septra) used to treat bacterial infections. Signs of a potential overdose may include mood changes and severe nausea/diarrhea.
6. **HYDROCODONE/ACETAMINOPHEN**- A narcotic pain reliever and cough suppressant often used in combination with other ingredients. Overdoses can lead to serious liver complications.
7. **IBUPROFEN** (NSAID pain reliever) - An anti-inflammatory used in drugs such as Advil, Aleve and Motrin. Ibuprofen is used to treat pain, stiffness, swelling, headaches and muscle aches. Taking Ibuprofen in large doses can increase the risk of developing stomach ulcers.
8. **ACETAMINOPHEN** (Tylenol) - A common over-the-counter pain and fever reducer used to treat headaches and minor aches and pains. Overdoses can cause serious liver damage, a risk heightened by alcohol usage.
9. **CEPHALEXIN** - An antibiotic used in the treatment of infections caused by certain bacteria, including urinary tract, ear and skin infections and pneumonia. Overdose symptoms may include nausea, diarrhea and blood in the urine.
10. **PENICILLIN**- An antibiotic used to treat certain bacterial infections. Many types of bacteria are now resistant to penicillin. Seizures and severe skin rash may indicate a possible overdose.