

# Common Medication Side Effects

## Q: Who is most likely to experience a side effect from a medication?

Researchers found that these residents were most likely to experience a side effect from a medication:

- 64% had high blood pressure
- 44% had dementia
- 36% had depression
- 14% had generalized muscle weakness



## Common Drug Side Effects in Older Adults

### Q: Muscle pain and weakness is associated most commonly with which class of drugs?

Aching and weakness of the muscles occurs in 10% to 15% of older adults taking **statins**, a class of drugs used to **treat high cholesterol**. The pain can range from mild fatigue and weakness to a life-threatening condition called rhabdomyolysis where the muscle tissues break down.

### Q: What are some statin drugs?

Lipitor (Atorvastatin), Crestor (Rosuvastatin), Simvastatin

### Q: Which medications cause bone loss?

**Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs)**, medications used to **treat acid reflux and indigestion**, reduce how much calcium the body absorbs from food and have been linked to bone loss and fractures.

### Q: What are some PPIs?

Omeprazole and Pantoprazole

### High potassium levels can be a side effect of taking Bactrim, ACE Inhibitors (ex: lisinopril), and ARBs (ex: Losartan)

### Q: What are the symptoms of high potassium levels?

Weakness, tingling, numbness, and potentially lethal disturbances in heart rhythm are all possible symptoms of having high potassium levels in the blood.

### Q: What medications can increase falls and delirium?

Anti-insomnia medications, anti-anxiety medications, muscle relaxers, and opioid pain relievers.

### Q: What medications can increase heart and gastrointestinal problems?

All NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs), including ibuprofen and naproxen, roughly double the risk of gastrointestinal bleeding, peptic ulcer disease, heart failure exacerbation, and acute kidney damage. **Residents over 75 should avoid NSAIDs.**

### Q: What are the symptoms of low sodium levels?

Nausea, confusion and dizziness.

**Low sodium levels can be caused by SSRI antidepressants like sertraline (Zoloft), escitalopram (Lexapro), fluoxetine (Prozac), and paroxetine (Paxil).**