

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).