

Foods & Medicines Safety

This chart will help you steer clear of side effects that can be caused by pairing certain foods and medicines.

Did you know foods you eat could affect the medicine you take? Eating or drinking certain foods can cause your body to absorb medicine slower or faster. This can make medicine less effective or cause troubling side effects. The chart below lists some common drug-food interactions, but it does not include every medicine or food interaction. Be sure to ask your doctor or pharmacist about possible interactions between food, vitamins, supplements, herbals or other drugs before taking any prescription or over-the-counter medicines.

DRUG CLASS	RX MEDICINE	TIPS
Analgesics (pain relievers)	Percocet (<i>acetaminophen/ oxycodone</i>) Tylenol #3 (<i>acetaminophen/ codeine</i>) Norco, Vicodin (<i>acetaminophen/ hydrocodone</i>)	Avoid drinking alcohol. Take with food to reduce upset stomach. Avoid over-the-counter Tylenol (acetaminophen)-containing products. It's unsafe to take more than 4,000 mg of acetaminophen in 24 hours.
Anti-arrhythmics (irregular heart beat)	Cordarone, Pacerone (<i>amiodarone</i>)	Avoid eating grapefruit and drinking grapefruit juice. May take with or without food, but take the same time each day.
Antibiotics	Ampicillin Penicillin	Take on an empty stomach for best absorption.
	Cipro (<i>ciprofloxacin</i>) Doxycycline Tetracycline Levaquin (<i>levofloxacin</i>)	To improve absorption, avoid antacids, iron-containing foods and calcium-rich dairy products.
	Flagyl (<i>metronidazole</i>) Tindamax (<i>tinidazole</i>)	Avoid alcohol while taking and for 3 days after finishing the medication. Take with food to prevent upset stomach; take probiotics (yogurt or supplements) to prevent diarrhea.
	Griseofulvin	Take with fatty food (ice cream, whole milk or cheese) for better absorption.
Anti-coagulants (blood thinners)	Coumadin, Jantoven (<i>warfarin</i>)	Avoid sudden increase or decrease in foods rich in vitamin K (green leafy vegetables, avocados, soybeans, green tea, bacon, butter, cheese) and multivitamins with vitamin K. Check with your doctor or pharmacist for a complete list. Limit alcohol and cranberry juice.

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Antidepressants	Paxil (<i>paroxetine</i>) Prozac (<i>fluoxetine</i>) Zoloft (<i>sertraline</i>) Lexapro (<i>escitalopram</i>) Celexa (<i>citalopram</i>)	Avoid drinking alcohol; avoid use of nicotine or tobacco products.
Antipsychotics	Clozaril (<i>clozapine</i>)	Avoid drinking alcohol and caffeine.
	Abilify (<i>aripiprazole</i>) Seroquel (<i>quetiapine</i>)	Avoid drinking alcohol and grapefruit juice.
Anti-seizure	Dilantin (<i>phenytoin</i>)	Take on an empty stomach at the same time every day. Avoid calcium or antacids within 2 hours of taking medicine.
	Carbatrol, Tegretol (<i>carbamazepine</i>)	Avoid eating grapefruit and drinking grapefruit juice.
	Depakote (<i>divalproex</i>) Lamictal (<i>lamotrigine</i>) Lyrica (<i>pregabalin</i>) Topamax (<i>topiramate</i>) Zarontin (<i>ethosuximide</i>)	Avoid drinking alcohol.
Cholesterol	Lipitor (<i>atorvastatin</i>) Mevacor (<i>lovastatin</i>) Zocor (<i>simvastatin</i>)	Avoid eating large amounts of grapefruit or grapefruit juice (greater than 1 quart per day). Do not eat oat bran within 2-4 hours of taking medicine.
Diabetes Drugs	Glucophage (<i>metformin</i>) DiaBeta (<i>glyburide</i>) Glucotrol (<i>glipizide</i>) Amaryl (<i>glimepiride</i>)	Avoid drinking alcohol. If diabetes is well controlled, limit alcohol to 1-2 drinks per day consumed with a meal.
Gastrointestinal Drugs	Reglan (<i>metaclopramide</i>)	Avoid drinking or limit alcohol. Take 30 minutes before meals.
	Nexium (<i>esomeprazole</i>) Prilosec (<i>omeprazole</i>) Protonix (<i>pantoprazole</i>)	Take at least 1 hour before meals.
	Tagamet (<i>cimetidine</i>) Zantac (<i>rantidine</i>)	Avoid drinking alcohol, caffeine and nicotine.
Gout Medications*	Colcrys (<i>colchicine</i>)	Avoid eating grapefruit and drinking grapefruit juice.
	Zyloprim (<i>allopurinol</i>)	Take after meals.
	*If you have gout, avoid large amounts of purine-rich foods (anchovies, beef stock gravies, sardines, shellfish, asparagus, lentils and red meat—especially pork). Check with your doctor or pharmacist for a complete list.	

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High Blood Pressure	ACE Inhibitors Monopril (<i>fosinopril</i>) Prinivil, Zestril (<i>lisinopril</i>) Vasotec (<i>enalapril</i>)	Avoid potassium-based salt substitutes and eating large amounts of foods high in potassium (almonds, bananas, cantaloupe, kidney beans, oranges/orange juice, potatoes with skin, tomato juice, spinach).
	Calcium Channel Blockers Calan (<i>verapamil</i>) Cardizem (<i>diltiazem</i>) Plendil (<i>felodipine</i>) Procardia (<i>nifedipine</i>)	Avoid drinking Seville (sour) orange juice, eating grapefruit, and drinking grapefruit juice. Limit caffeine when taking Calan.
	Beta Blockers Tenormin (<i>atenolol</i>)	Avoid drinking orange juice. Do not take calcium products within 2 hours of taking medicine.
	Lopressor (<i>metoprolol tartrate</i>)	Take with or immediately after meals. Do not take calcium products within 2 hours of taking medicine.
	Diuretics Aldactone (<i>spironolactone</i>) Dyrenium (<i>triamterene</i>) Midamor (<i>amiloride</i>)	Avoid potassium-based salt substitutes and eating large amounts of foods high in potassium (bananas, cantaloupe, kidney beans, potatoes with skin, tomato juice, spinach).
Immunosuppressant Drugs	Neoral, Sandimmune (<i>cyclosporine</i>) Prograf (<i>tacrolimus</i>) Rapamune (<i>sirolimus</i>)	Avoid eating grapefruit and drinking grapefruit juice. Avoid potassium-based salt substitutes and eating large amounts of food high in potassium (almonds, avocados, bananas, cantaloupe, kidney beans, oranges/orange juice, potatoes with skin, spinach).
MAO Inhibitors	Eldepryl, Zelapar, Emsam (<i>selegiline</i>) Marplan (<i>isocarboxazid</i>) Nardil (<i>phenelzine</i>) Parnate (<i>tranylcypromine</i>)	Avoid foods high in tyramine (aged cheese, avocado, banana, bologna, pepperoni, salami, pickled herring, liver, raisins, yeast extracts, red wine, sour cream). Avoid drinking large amounts of alcohol and caffeine (chocolate, coffee, tea).
Osteoporosis	Bisphosphonates Fosamax (<i>alendronate</i>) Boniva (<i>ibandronate</i>) Atelvia, Actonel (<i>risedronate</i>)	Take on an empty stomach with 8 oz. of water in the morning before breakfast. Do not take any other drugs, vitamins or food within 30 minutes (60 minutes for ibandronate) of taking medicine. Remain upright, not reclining or lying down, for 1 hour after taking.
Thyroid Hormones	Levoxyol, Synthroid, Unithroid, Tirosint (<i>levothyroxine</i>)	Take on an empty stomach 30–60 minutes before breakfast with 8 oz. of water. Avoid eating walnuts, soybean flour, dietary fiber, and calcium products within 4 hours of taking medicine.