# I take aspirin every day for back pain. Is this safe?

August 21, 2018 By Lucinda K. Porter RN

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It depends. Aspirin is an effective pain reliever, but taking it comes with potential risks as well as benefits. You didn't say how much you take or if this was medically prescribed, but the risks increase with higher doses, frequency of use and age.

When taken at high doses and for a long time, aspirin can slowly damage the protective layer in the stomach and intestine. This can lead to upset stomach, heartburn and ulcers. Further, aspirin reduces the blood's clotting ability, which can increase risk of bleeding in the stomach, small intestine and brain.

If your doctor advises continued use of aspirin, ask for tips on how to reduce your risks of side effects. Read the package insert, especially the warnings and drug interactions. Be sure to take aspirin with a full glass of water and report any side effects to your health care provider.

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