

# 10 MOST DANGEROUS PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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Prescription medication is part of daily life for millions of people worldwide. These drugs, used in accordance with medical guidelines, can maintain health and sustain life. However, when prescription medication is abused, these drugs can produce harmful side effects equal to many illegal drugs such as cocaine and heroin. These medications can also lead to very serious health consequences even if they are used for an extended period of time in the manner in which was prescribed. The following is a partial list of some common prescription medication and the effects that are caused if they are abused, used other than medically directed or used for a prolonged period of time.

## Prednisone

Prednisone, or cortisone, is a very effective short-term medication for ailments such as poison ivy. However, if prednisone is used for long-term treatments, some potentially dangerous health risks may arise. Extended use of prednisone can cause health disorders such as hypertension, osteoporosis, peptic ulcers, diabetes, cataracts and intestinal bleeding, just to name a few. It is important to note that if prednisone has been taken for a prolonged period, time should be taken to taper off prednisone and not to simply stop taking the medication.

## Chemotherapy Drugs

Chemotherapy drugs, such as methotrexate, are actually poisons that are prescribed to kill cancer cells in the body. These drugs also kill healthy cells in the body. Chemotherapeutic agents are also prescribed to treat ailments such as rheumatoid arthritis. Health risks associated with extended use of chemotherapeutic agents are fetal death, congenital abnormalities, liver toxicity, kidney toxicity, lung disease and suppressed immune system.

## Statins for Cholesterol Reduction

Cholesterol medications such as Mevacor, Zocor and Pravachol are known as statins. Statins are used to reduce cholesterol production in the liver and change the method in which LDL cholesterol enters the cells. Prolonged use of statin medication can produce side effects such as liver toxicity, muscle inflammation and cataracts.

## Blood Thinners

Blood thinning agents such as Coumadin (warfarin) are commonly prescribed to prevent strokes and heart attacks. Individuals taking these types of medication should use extreme caution since severe bleeding can result even from the smallest cut or scratch. Death can result from excessive blood loss from what would seem to be a minor injury in individuals taking this type of medication.

## Prozac

Prozac (fluoxetine) is a medication prescribed to regulate and balance levels of serotonin in the brain. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that affects mood, anxiety and sleep. High levels of serotonin in the brain can cause agitation and anxiety, while low levels can cause depression. Drugs such as Prozac can cause a condition known as akathasia, a condition of constant agitation. Akathasia commonly occurs in conjunction with suicidal thoughts, hostility and violent behavior.

## ADD/ADHD Medication

Medications such as Ritalin and Adderall that are used to treat conditions like ADD and ADHD also can have some troubling side effects. These medications are relatively short acting and do not produce a physical addiction; however, severe psychological dependency can occur. These drugs can also produce side effects such as anxiety, insomnia and hostility.

## Pain Killers

Misuse of prescription pain killers such as OxyContin and Percocet can cause potentially life-threatening situations. These medications, if not used properly, can slow heart rate and hinder breathing which can have serious medical consequences or even cause death. The pain killer Lortab, which is widely prescribed, can cause excessive heart palpitations and can be especially dangerous when mixed with alcohol, due to the presence of Hydrocodone.

## Diabetes Drugs

Type 2 diabetes, or non-insulin dependent diabetes, is the most common form of diabetes. Medications such as Glucotrol are often prescribed to control type 2 diabetes. Medication is often times not necessary for treatment of this condition and glucose levels can be controlled by other methods. Medications such as Glucotrol have several side effects such as hypoglycemia, fatigue and liver damage.

## Arthritis Drugs

NSAIDS (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) such as Motrin and Celebrex are continually prescribed for treatment of arthritis pain. While effective in treatment of arthritis pain, they do cause a series of side effects. Some side effects associated with long-term use of NSAIDS include stomach upset, gastrointestinal bleeding, kidney damage and liver damage.

## Beta Blockers

Beta blockers are a class of drugs prescribed to lower blood pressure. Lopressor and Tenormin are some examples of beta blockers. These medications alter the heart's ability to respond to stimulators such as adrenaline and epinephrine. These drugs are meant to weaken the heart so blood pressure is lowered and, subsequently, heart pain is reduced. This class of medications also causes some serious side effects such as loss of libido, impotence, elevated blood lipids and compromised cardiac function.

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## REFERENCES

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Medical Watch--Top 7 Most Dangerous Drugs  
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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR** Robert Shifko has more than 17 years' experience in the health care industry. Throughout his career, he has gained experience in pharmacologic research, clinical nuclear medicine, and most recently radiation health physics. He has obtained several certifications in nuclear medicine, epidemiology, biostatistics and as a medical radiation safety officer. He has always supported LIVESTRONG.