IN THIS ISSUE (starts on next page)

In Brief: Does Acetaminophen Increase Blood Pressure? ................................................................. p 29

Important Copyright Message

The Medical Letter® publications are protected by US and international copyright laws. Forwarding, copying or any distribution of this material is prohibited.

Sharing a password with a non-subscriber or otherwise making the contents of this site available to third parties is strictly prohibited.

By accessing and reading the attached content I agree to comply with US and international copyright laws and these terms and conditions of The Medical Letter, Inc.

For further information click: Subscriptions, Site Licenses, Reprints or call customer service at: 800-211-2769
IN BRIEF

Does Acetaminophen Increase Blood Pressure?

A recent article in Circulation reported that acetaminophen (Tylenol, and others; paracetamol outside the US) increased blood pressure in patients with coronary artery disease. This conclusion was based on a randomized, placebo-controlled crossover trial in 33 patients; acetaminophen 1 g three times daily for 2 weeks was associated with statistically significant increases in blood pressure of 2.9 mmHg systolic and 2.2 mmHg diastolic.¹

NSAIDs can increase blood pressure; the mechanism is thought to be inhibition of cyclooxygenase leading to decreased renal prostaglandin activity. Acetaminophen also inhibits cyclooxygenase (primarily COX-2) and decreases prostaglandin activity.²

The small increases in blood pressure reported with acetaminophen would probably be inconsequential in low-risk patients, but might be a concern for those with cardiovascular disease. Like most drugs, acetaminophen should be used in the lowest effective doses for the shortest possible time. Mild to moderate pain due to osteoarthritis or headache generally responds to a dose of 650 mg.³