

Drug Interactions and their Side Effects

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DESCRIPTION

Drug interactions occur when two or more drugs interact with each other in a way that changes their effects or increases the risk of side effects. This can occur when different drugs are taken together, or when a drug is taken with certain foods, beverages, or supplements. Drug interactions can range from mild to severe and can affect people differently, depending on their age, health status, and other factors. It is important to be aware of potential drug interactions and to discuss them with the healthcare provider.

Types of drug interactions

There are several types of drug interactions that can occur, including:

Drug-drug interactions: This type of interaction occurs when two or more drugs interact with each other. This can lead to changes in the effectiveness of one or both drugs, as well as an increased risk of side effects.

Drug-food interactions: Certain foods can interact with drugs, affecting how the drug is absorbed or metabolized in the body. For example, grapefruit juice can interact with certain drugs, increasing their effects and potentially leading to side effects.

Drug-supplement interactions: Some supplements can interact with drugs, affecting how the drug is absorbed or metabolized in the body. For example, St. John's Wort can interact with certain drugs, making them less effective.

Drug-disease interactions: Certain diseases can affect how drugs are metabolized in the body, potentially leading to interactions. For example, liver disease can affect how drugs are metabolized in the liver, leading to an increased risk of side effects.

Effects of drug interactions

The effects of drug interactions can vary depending on the drugs involved, the dose, and other factors. Some drug interactions can lead to an increased risk of side effects, while others can make a drug less effective. In some cases, drug interactions can lead to serious health problems, such as:

Increased risk of bleeding: Some drugs, such as blood thinners, can increase the risk of bleeding when taken with other drugs, such as aspirin or certain supplements.

Increased risk of heart problems: Some drugs, such as certain antidepressants, can increase the risk of heart problems when taken with other drugs, such as certain pain medications.

Liver damage: Some drugs can cause liver damage when taken together, especially if the liver is already damaged or compromised.

Kidney damage: Some drugs can cause kidney damage when taken together, especially if the kidneys are already damaged or compromised.

Preventing drug interactions

To prevent drug interactions, it is important to be aware of the drugs which are taken and to discuss any potential interactions with healthcare provider. Here are some tips for preventing drug interactions:

- Keep a list of all the drugs are taken, including prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, and supplements.
- Discuss any potential drug interactions with healthcare provider before starting a new medication or supplement.
- Read the labels of all drugs and supplements carefully, and follow the instructions.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking certain medications, as it can increase the risk of side effects.
- Be aware of any potential interactions with certain foods or beverages, such as grapefruit juice.
- Do not change the dose or stop taking a medication only after talking to a healthcare provider.

CONCLUSION

Drug interactions can be serious and potentially life-threatening. It is important to be aware of the drugs which are taken and to discuss any potential interactions with a healthcare provider. By following these tips, one can help prevent drug interactions and ensure that one can take medications safely and effectively. If one can experience any side effects or symptoms while taking a medication, contact healthcare provider immediately.

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