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HEALTH  
 INFORMATION  
 FOR NEW YORK  
 STATE RESIDENTS



Improving Healthcare  
 for the Common Good®

## What is an adverse drug event (ADE)?

**A**n ADE is ANY harm caused by a medicine that a person is taking. Anyone who is taking medicines can have an ADE. It can happen with any changes in your medicines. An ADE can also happen:

- Even if you have been taking the same medicine for a long time
- Even if the medicine you are taking has been prescribed at the right dose.

This is why it is so important for you to know about the possible signs and symptoms of an ADE.

### Signs/symptoms of an ADE

- New or increased confusion,
- New or increased depression,
- New or worsening insomnia (problems sleeping),
- Rash,
- New incontinence (loss of control of bladder or bowels),
- Weakness or a feeling of being tired all the time,
- Loss of appetite,
- Falls,
- Changes in speech,
- Bruising, bleeding, blood in stool,
- Nausea/vomiting,
- Trouble breathing.

### What to do if you recognize an ADE sign/symptom

If you believe you are experiencing an ADE, contact your doctor or pharmacist immediately. If you are having a severe or life threatening reaction such as bleeding that doesn't stop, breathing problems, chest pain, confusion, or fainting call 911.

### Are ADEs preventable?

Some ADEs can be prevented, while others cannot. But if you know about ADEs that can be caused by certain medicines, you can prevent serious problems. Here are some examples of medicines that have known ADEs.

*IPRO Healthy Insights* is authored by Dr. Clare Bradley, IPRO's Senior Vice President/Chief Medical Officer, and a nationally recognized public health advocate.

Founded in 1984, IPRO is a New York based, national, not-for-profit organization. IPRO provides a range of healthcare improvement services that aim to improve the quality and value of healthcare provided to consumers across the country.

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## Examples of Drug Types Associated with Preventable ADEs

Drug Type	Example Names of Drugs in Each Type	Preventable ADEs
<b>Analgesics</b>	ibuprofen, naproxen, aspirin	stomach bleeds, reduced kidney function, high blood pressure
	opioids (hydrocodone, oxycodone, fentanyl)	dizziness, drowsiness, constipation, falls, decreased rate of breathing
<b>Antibiotics</b>	amoxicillin, cephalexin, azithromycin, levofloxacin	rash, drug interactions, intestinal issues (diarrhea, nausea/vomiting)
<b>Anticoagulants</b>	warfarin, heparin	bleeding, drug interactions
<b>Heart medicines</b>	digoxin	stomach upset, diarrhea, trouble with vision, low heart rate
	water pills (furosemide) & high blood pressure medications (atenolol, lisinopril)	low blood pressure
<b>Anxiety medicines</b>	alprazolam, clonazepam, diazepam	sleepiness, falls
<b>Diabetes medicines</b>	insulin, glyburide, glipizide	low blood sugar, dizziness, confusion, sweating, nausea

### How to prevent ADEs

- Take ONLY the medicines that your doctors prescribed for you,
- Do NOT share your medicines with others,
- Take your medicines exactly as your doctor advised,
- Never change the dose of your medication without the approval of your doctor,
- Ask your pharmacist or doctor before taking any over the counter or herbal medications,
- Always have a list of ALL your medications with you,
- Be sure EACH of your doctors know ALL the medications you are taking,
- Get ALL of your medications from the same pharmacy,
- Attend your regularly scheduled doctor appointments,
- Ask questions when you are unsure of anything,
- Be your own advocate.

For more information, please visit

<http://atlanticquality.org/initiatives/drug-safety/drug-safety-ny>

[https://www.cdc.gov/medicationsafety/adult\\_adversedrugsafety.html](https://www.cdc.gov/medicationsafety/adult_adversedrugsafety.html)



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