

Treatment with Medications

The Limitations of Anti-Inflammatory Drugs

The Limitations of Anti-Inflammatory Drugs

The Limitations of Anti-Inflammatory Drugs

Research tells us that inflammation is a significant part of pain production in many spine disorders. Then why shouldn't we all take anti-inflammatory drugs around the clock for the rest of our lives? It is because there are significant and sometimes life threatening side effects associated with long term drug use. The use of drugs should be reserved for those situations where more conservative measures have failed to help, or in cases of emergency intervention.

Anti-inflammatory drugs (aspirin, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), COX-2 inhibitors, and corticosteroids) are used to stop the formation of pro-inflammatory chemicals. Many individuals die each day due to complications even though they are using the correct dosage of anti-inflammatory drugs. In the United States there are over 20,000 hospitalizations each year associated with NSAID-induced gastrointestinal toxicity and approximately 2,000 deaths resulting from major complications such as hemorrhage or perforation. Chronic use of anti-inflammatory drugs is not a long-term solution for management of pain.