



## What should I do?

Use your arthritis medicine(s) safely by:

- Understanding what each of your medicine(s) is for.
- Knowing how to take them properly – at the right time and in the correct dose.
- Knowing when to take them to get maximum benefit and reduce the chance of unwanted effects.
- Recognising any unwanted effects and knowing what to do if they occur.
- Asking your pharmacist or doctor for a CMI (Consumer Medicine Information) leaflet for each of your medicines.
- Telling your doctor and pharmacist about all the medicines you are taking, including medicines purchased from health food shops and supermarkets.

Ask your doctor  
and your pharmacist  
for more information.

## Veterans' MATES

What you need  
to know about  
common arthritis  
medicines

Get the best from  
your medicines



## Veterans' MATES

Provided by:

University of South Australia  
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## medicines

### What are common arthritis medicines?

The two most common types of medicines for treating arthritis are paracetamol and Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs – said as “en-say-ds”).

These medicines can be prescribed by your doctor and some can be bought from the pharmacy or supermarket.

Common brands of paracetamol are Panadol® and Panamax®.

Common brands of NSAIDs are Brufen®, Celebrex®, Mobic®, Nurofen®, Panafen® and Voltaren®.

### How do they work?

Paracetamol works by reducing pain and stiffness in joints but it is not as good at reducing swelling (inflammation) as NSAIDs.

NSAIDs work by reducing pain and inflammation in muscles, ligaments, tendons and joints.



## safety

### Using arthritis medicine(s) safely

- Paracetamol is most effective when taken regularly each day.
- Always check medicine packaging for recommended doses and maximum daily dose.
- If you are taking NSAIDs, tell your doctor if you notice any unwanted effects such as stomach pain, indigestion/heartburn, swollen feet or ankles or unexplained and sudden weight gain.
- Take NSAIDs with a meal.
- If you have diabetes and/or kidney disease talk to your doctor or pharmacist about which arthritis pain medicines are best for you.
- If you take medicines for your heart or blood pressure, talk to your doctor or pharmacist about which arthritis pain medicines are best for you.



## tips

### Tips for managing your arthritis pain

- Ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice about your arthritis pain.
- Keep your joints moving with low-impact exercises such as walking, dancing and swimming.
- Aim for a healthy weight.
- Talk to your doctor about trying medicines other than NSAIDs.
- All medicines have risks and benefits. Always check ingredients of medicines you buy at health food shops or supermarkets with your health professional.

Take this brochure and **Speak to your doctor and/or pharmacist** about how you can get the best from your arthritis medicine(s).

