

# ACETAMINOPHEN (TYLENOL) AND LIVER HEALTH

## What is Acetaminophen?

Acetaminophen is a medicine that is used to relieve pain and reduce fever. It is found in many forms (pill and liquid). One brand name of acetaminophen is Tylenol. More than 600 different over-the-counter and prescription medicines contain acetaminophen, including generic and store brand pain relievers, fever reducers, and sleep aids as well as cough, cold, and allergy medicine.

## How Can Acetaminophen Affect the Liver?

The liver processes everything we put into our bodies, including medicines. Medical experts state that for most people, acetaminophen is safe if it is taken according to the directions on the label.

Serious liver damage can occur if too much acetaminophen is taken at one time or over the course of a few days. In fact, this is the number one cause of acute (sudden) liver failure in the USA. Acute liver failure can sometimes be reversed, but it may often lead to the need for a liver transplant.

## Proper Use of Acetaminophen

It is always a good idea to discuss medication use with your doctor, and to discuss your child's medication use with his or her pediatrician. To protect liver health when using any product containing acetaminophen, follow these simple guidelines:

- Carefully read and follow all directions on the medication label before using a product. Look for information about:
  - How much to take
  - How often to take it (how long between each dose)
  - Maximum amount for daily use
- Don't take more than one product that contains acetaminophen at the same time. If you are not sure if a product contains acetaminophen, or if the instructions are not clear, make sure to contact your doctor or a pharmacist before using it.
- The combination of acetaminophen and alcohol can have a very serious negative impact on liver health. Speak to your doctor about using acetaminophen if you drink alcohol on a regular basis.

**To learn more about acetaminophen and liver health, scan the QR code below. For a complete list of all of our free resources, please visit: [liverfoundation.org/resource-center](https://liverfoundation.org/resource-center).**

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For questions about liver wellness and disease, or for emotional support to patients at the point of crisis and information on local resources including physician referrals, please contact our Helpline at 1-800-465-4837.

