

# STOP ACUTE PAIN *FAST!*



by Jan McBarron, MD, ND

When you're suddenly hit with pain, you want relief and you want it now! Acute pain comes on fast—usually due to an injury—and it doesn't stick around once the problem gets fixed. But in the meantime, you want that pain to stop. The problem is, most over-the-counter (OTC) pain relievers come with potential side effects that could actually make you feel worse. Luckily, Mother Nature has provided several safe and effective pain relievers that have been helping people manage acute pain for centuries.

## COMMON CAUSES OF ACUTE PAIN

Acute pain can almost always be traced to a clear cause—usually some kind of injury. It starts suddenly and sharply,

sending your body a signal to pay attention because something's gone wrong. Everything from a stubbed toe to a surgical incision delivers acute pain. And no matter what causes that pain, it starts with inflammation—your body's natural response to damage.

Common causes of acute pain include:

- Broken bones
- Bruises
- Cuts
- Dental work
- Muscle cramps
- Overstretched tendons and ligaments
- Sprains and strains
- Surgery

Fortunately, acute pain typically vanishes as soon as your body repairs

the problem. Until that happens, though, you need something to help reduce your pain so you can get on with your day.

## WHEN PAIN RELIEF COMES WITH A HEAVY COST

Pain medications may offer quick relief, but even the safest options come with potentially deadly side effects. Every type of pain medication—including OTC drugs—comes with its own list of warnings.

Here's just a quick look

at a few of the complications you could be faced with if you rely on pharmaceutical pain medications:



• **Opioids:**

*addiction, sedation, respiratory distress*

• **NSAIDs:**

*heart attack, stroke, kidney damage, gastrointestinal bleeding*

• **Acetaminophen:**

*liver failure, death*

If you want to stop acute pain without risking nasty side effects, you have other options. You can safely treat acute pain with time-tested solutions that really work.

### SIMPLE WAYS TO PREVENT ACUTE PAIN

If you've ever overdone it—exercising, shoveling snow, moving a sofa—your body registered a complaint in the form of scorching pain. Unlike accidents or surgeries, this kind of acute pain can be avoided. Some simple steps you can take to prevent the agony of acute pain include stretching before and after physical activity, strengthening the muscles in problem areas such as the lower back and around joints, and applying ice to painful areas immediately after an injury to reduce painful inflammation. But sometimes, no matter how careful you are, you'll end up suffering from acute pain. When that strikes, you can rely on natural solutions to ease your pain without the fear of dangerous side effects.

### 3 NATURAL PAIN RELIEVERS

Herbs and nutrients have been used for thousands of years to treat acute pain, and now we have scientific studies to back up their traditional use. These natural pain relievers have been found to provide the same benefits as pharmaceuticals without negative side effects. Plus, unlike pharmaceutical pain pills, you can use safely these natural pain relievers together. In fact, some combinations can enhance the overall effects, so you can feel better faster.

**Curcumin.** When it comes to pain relief, curcumin lands at the top of the list. A key compound found in turmeric,

curcumin goes to work quickly to calm inflammation and quiet acute pain. It blocks an enzyme called COX-2 that sets off inflammation and pain after an injury. Research shows that curcumin can also reduce post-surgical pain and swelling. A 2019 pilot study published in the *Journal of Complementary and Integrative Medicine* found that curcumin significantly reduced pain severity following surgery. But since curcumin can be hard for your body to absorb, look for a highly bioavailable form known as BCM-95, which has been clinically studied for its ability to relieve pain quickly.

**Boswellia.** Boswellia offers a unique pathway to pain relief through its main compound, acetyl-11-keto-beta-boswellic acid (AKBA). Used in traditional Ayurvedic medicine, boswellia targets 5-LOX, a pro-inflammatory enzyme that triggers pain. A study published in the *Indian Journal of Pharmacology* showed that a single dose of boswellia significantly reduces the perception of pain.

Boswellia also works synergistically with curcumin. A 2020 clinical study found that a combination of boswellia and curcumin relieved acute pain as quickly and effectively as acetaminophen. Patients taking the herbal combo felt relief within one hour, with a significant reduction in their pain intensity. Check the supplement facts label to ensure boswellia is standardized to contain more than 70 percent AKBA.

**Black Sesame Seed Oil.** Studies show that black sesame seed oil provides potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits. Used for centuries in traditional Taiwanese and Ayurvedic medicine to ease inflammatory pain, research published in the journal *SpringerPlus* reported that black sesame seed oil decreases immune cytokines that trigger inflammatory pain. Other studies have found that, used topically, sesame seed oil soothes muscle pain and speeds the healing of

### ASHWAGANDHA— A surprising source of pain relief

Ashwagandha is typically associated with stress relief, but it also helps manage acute pain and helps to increase your body's pain threshold. In addition, ashwagandha decreases inflammation and interrupts the pain signals that are sent through the nervous system. A clinical trial published in the *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine* showed that taking ashwagandha significantly reduced pain and stiffness in people suffering from knee pain, thanks to a compound called Withaferin A that blocks the COX pain pathway.



wounds and burns. Beyond this direct effect on inflammation, black sesame seed oil also helps carry and disperse fat-soluble nutrients like curcumin and boswellia to the site of injury, quickly relieving acute pain. ■



**Jan McBarron, MD, ND,** advocates a comprehensive approach to health that encompasses both traditional medicine, including prescribing drugs and surgery, and naturopathy. She enjoyed over 30 years in private

practice while cohosting the nationally syndicated health talk radio broadcast *Duke & The Doctor*. Dr. McBarron is also an author, philanthropist, educator, and the recipient of multiple awards.