

# NSAID Bleeding Risk Checklist

A detailed bleeding-risk review guide for people using naproxen sodium or other NSAIDs.

Detailed 12-page patient education guide. Educational information only; not a diagnosis or treatment plan.

- Use this guide to prepare safer questions for a clinician or pharmacist.
- Record facts such as dose timing, symptom severity, other medicines, and warning signs.
- Seek urgent help for dangerous symptoms instead of waiting to complete a worksheet.

## Why Bleeding Risk Matters

NSAIDs can irritate the stomach lining and may increase the chance of gastrointestinal bleeding in susceptible people.

Risk can rise when naproxen sodium is combined with aspirin, blood thinners, antiplatelet medicines, steroids, alcohol, or certain antidepressants.

A bleeding-risk conversation is especially important for people with previous ulcers, previous GI bleeding, older age, or repeated pain-reliever use.

## **Bleeding Symptoms to Treat Seriously**

Black or tarry stools, vomiting blood, coffee-ground vomit, fainting, severe weakness, severe stomach pain, or unusual shortness of breath should not be ignored.

Unusual bruising, nosebleeds, prolonged bleeding, or blood in urine may also be relevant when other medicines increase bleeding risk.

When symptoms are severe or frightening, seek urgent care instead of waiting to see whether the next dose helps.

## Purpose and Scope

This document is a detailed patient education guide about naproxen sodium and bleeding risk. It is designed for patients, caregivers, pharmacists, and clinicians who need a clear worksheet for safer conversations.

It does not diagnose a medical condition, replace professional care, or instruct anyone to start, stop, restart, combine, or change a medicine. Personal decisions should be made with a qualified healthcare professional who knows the patient's history.

Naproxen sodium is a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug, often called an NSAID. It can help with pain and inflammation, but it can also carry stomach, bleeding, kidney, blood pressure, heart, allergic, and interaction risks.

## Before Using Naproxen Sodium

Before taking a dose, confirm the product strength, the directions on the label or prescription, the reason for use, and whether another NSAID is already being used.

Over-the-counter access does not remove risk. A short course for one patient may be reasonable, while repeated use for another patient may require a clinician's review.

Risk factors include prior stomach ulcer or bleeding, kidney disease, heart disease, high blood pressure, older age, dehydration, blood thinners, steroids, aspirin, alcohol, and multiple pain relievers.

## Daily Tracking Worksheet

Use one row per dose or symptom episode. The most useful entries are short, factual, and dated. Avoid relying on memory after several days of symptoms.

Record the date, dose, time, reason for use, pain score before and after, food intake, hydration, other medicines, and any symptom that appears after the dose.

If symptoms are severe, get help first and document later. A worksheet should never delay emergency care.

- Date and time
- Dose and strength
- Reason for use
- Pain score before dose
- Pain score after dose
- Other medicines used that day
- New or worsening symptoms

## Stomach and Bleeding Warning Signs

Stomach discomfort can be mild, but some gastrointestinal symptoms are warning signs. Black or tarry stools, vomiting blood, coffee-ground vomit, fainting, severe weakness, or severe abdominal pain require urgent attention.

Bleeding risk can be higher when naproxen sodium is combined with aspirin, blood thinners, antiplatelet medicines, steroids, SSRIs, SNRIs, alcohol, or a history of ulcers.

Do not assume stomach symptoms are safe because the medicine was purchased over the counter.

- Black stools
- Vomiting blood
- Severe stomach pain
- Unusual bruising
- Nosebleeds
- Blood thinner use
- Aspirin or steroid use

## Kidney, Hydration, and Blood Pressure

NSAIDs can affect kidney blood flow and may contribute to fluid retention or blood pressure changes in susceptible patients.

Extra caution is important during dehydration, vomiting, diarrhea, poor fluid intake, fever, kidney disease, heart failure, older age, or use of diuretics, ACE inhibitors, or ARBs.

Warning signs may include reduced urination, ankle swelling, sudden weight gain, unusual fatigue, confusion, or shortness of breath.

- Reduced urination
- Swelling
- Sudden weight gain
- High blood pressure
- Diuretic use
- ACE inhibitor or ARB use
- Dehydration

## Heart and Stroke Symptoms

NSAID labels include warnings about heart attack and stroke risk. The risk may be related to personal medical history, dose, duration, and other risk factors.

Emergency symptoms include chest pain, shortness of breath, sudden weakness on one side, facial droop, trouble speaking, sudden severe headache, or fainting.

People with heart disease, stroke history, uncontrolled blood pressure, diabetes, smoking history, or high cholesterol should ask whether naproxen sodium is appropriate.

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Facial droop
- One-sided weakness
- Trouble speaking
- Severe headache
- Worsening blood pressure

## Medication Interaction Review

A medication review is one of the most practical safety steps. Include prescriptions, over-the-counter products, supplements, herbal products, vitamins, alcohol use, and old medicine bottles.

Ask specifically about duplicate NSAIDs, aspirin, anticoagulants, antiplatelets, steroids, SSRIs, SNRIs, diuretics, ACE inhibitors, ARBs, lithium, methotrexate, and alcohol.

Pharmacists can often identify interaction risk quickly when the full list is available.

- Aspirin
- Ibuprofen or another NSAID
- Blood thinner
- Steroid
- SSRI or SNRI
- Diuretic
- Lithium or methotrexate

## Procedure, Dental, and Surgery Planning

Patients should tell dentists, surgeons, and procedural teams about naproxen sodium use, especially before dental extraction, surgery, endoscopy, colonoscopy, or any procedure with bleeding risk.

Do not stop or continue medicine around a procedure based only on online advice. The care team should decide based on procedure type and personal risk.

Bring the exact bottle and list the last dose date and time.

- Procedure date
- Last dose time
- Reason for use
- Bleeding history
- Blood thinner use
- Dental or surgical instructions
- Who gave the plan

## Questions for a Doctor or Pharmacist

Good questions are specific. Ask whether naproxen sodium fits the medical history, current medicines, and reason for pain.

Ask how long it should be used, what maximum amount applies, what to avoid, what symptoms require urgent care, and what to do if pain continues.

If pain keeps returning, ask whether the underlying cause needs evaluation instead of repeated self-treatment.

- Is naproxen appropriate for me?
- What risks apply to me?
- What should I avoid?
- When should I call?
- What if pain continues?
- Do I need monitoring?
- What alternatives fit my history?

## When to Seek Urgent Help

Use urgent or emergency care for severe allergic reaction, trouble breathing, face or throat swelling, chest pain, stroke-like symptoms, fainting, black stools, vomiting blood, severe stomach pain, or sharply reduced urination.

Same-day medical advice is appropriate for worsening swelling, blood pressure changes, rash, wheezing, unusual bruising, persistent stomach pain, or symptoms that begin after combining medicines.

A worksheet is useful only after immediate safety is addressed.

- Trouble breathing
- Face or throat swelling
- Chest pain
- Stroke-like symptoms
- Black stools
- Vomiting blood
- Severe stomach pain

## Follow-Up Log

After speaking with a clinician or pharmacist, write down the plan in plain language. Include whether to continue, stop, avoid combinations, monitor blood pressure, check kidney function, schedule follow-up, or seek urgent care for specific symptoms.

Keep the plan with the medicine list so caregivers and other clinicians can see it.

If advice changes, date the new plan and note who gave it.

- Date of advice
- Clinician or pharmacist name
- Plan
- Symptoms to watch
- Follow-up date
- Lab or blood pressure plan
- Emergency instructions

## Sources and Editorial Notes

This document was created as patient education. It summarizes safety themes from official drug information and does not replace a personalized medication review.

Primary source links used for this resource: MedlinePlus naproxen drug information, DailyMed naproxen sodium labeling information, FDA NSAID cardiovascular warning communication, and FDA MedWatch adverse event reporting resources.

Readers should use qualified healthcare professionals for diagnosis, treatment decisions, dose changes, stopping decisions, and urgent symptoms.