



Medications and Side Effects

What medications are you taking?

This is a question the Fitness Professional must ask. Knowing your medications and the side effects of your medications is very important to your exercise program. This understanding alerts the Personal Trainer to possible exercise risk factors. An educated Personal Trainer will be able to identify side effects while monitoring you for a safe and productive workout. Be sure your Fitness Professional understands you and your special medical concerns.

Multiple medications taken together can lead to adverse physical side effects. Know these side effects for balancing performance expectations. Be sure your medical doctor understands the type of exercise program you are taking and has given you medical clearance to participate.

Common Medications (for those over age 50) and their Side Effects

- Anti-hypertensive drugs (for high blood pressure), such as diuretics and vasodilators: may cause hypotension upon standing, which could lead to dizziness and fainting.
- Diuretics used to control blood pressure may cause dehydration.
- Beta blockers used for treatment of heart disease cause a suppression of resting and exercise heart rates.
- Sleep aids used to treat insomnia may cause clients to feel sluggish, and experience headaches, blurred vision, and altered coordination.
- Anti-anxiety and anti-depression medications can cause dizziness, impaired balance, and decreased alertness, as well as cardiac arrhythmias, tachycardia (rapid heart rate), blurred vision and dry mouth. They also have sedative effects and should be taken in evening versus in the morning.
- Thyroid hormones can affect blood pressure, heart rate, body temperature, and body weight.
- Statins for dyslipidemia (abnormally elevated cholesterol or fats / lipids in the blood) have been associated with skeletal muscle effects. Be alert for unexplained muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness.

General Side Effects to Medications

- Headache
- Drowsiness
- Loss of coordination
- Impaired vision
- Orthostatic hypotension (a form of low blood pressure that causes dizziness or fainting when standing from a seated position or from lying down)