

Less Pain, Less Joy: A New Look at Acetaminophen

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The Wall Street Journal:

Consider this trade-off the next time you have a headache: Would you take a medicine that didn't just ease the pain but muffled your happiness too?

A recent study suggests that acetaminophen—found in Tylenol, Excedrin and a host of other medications—is an all-purpose damper, stifling a range of strong feelings. Throbbing pain, the sting of rejection, paralyzing indecision—along with euphoria and delight—all appear to be taken down a notch by the drug.

For most people, this over-the-counter palliative doesn't demand much thought: Take the right dose and the pain goes away. But it may not be that simple.

In 2010, the psychologists Naomi Eisenberger and Nathan DeWall discovered that a three-week course of acetaminophen soothed social pain, like feelings of exclusion or ridicule. The drug also assuaged the agony of indecision, Dr. DeWall found earlier this year.

Read the whole story: [The Wall Street Journal](#)