HOWDEN HEALTH CENTRE

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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR MEDICINES**

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicines are used to treat arthritis and other conditions that cause pain and inflammation. They include diclofenac, ibuprofen and naproxen.

As with any medicine, they can cause side effects in some people. Most side effects are mild, but rarely they can be serious. The risks are lower with anti-inflammatory gels or creams.

You should always use the lowest dose of anti-inflammatory medicine that controls your symptoms and stop taking the medicine if it is no longer needed.

* Anti-inflammatory medicines can cause rare but potentially serious side effects on your heart. In particular, they may slightly increase the risk of heart attack or stroke. The risk of this increases with dose and duration of treatment and the risk is greater for those who already have heart disease. Please arrange an appointment with the doctor or pharmacist if you are concerned, particularly if you have a condition such as heart failure, other heart disease (e.g. angina), circulatory problems causing leg pain, or if you have had a heart attack or stroke.
  + We would recommend at least an annual check of your blood pressure if you continue to take this medicine.
* Common side effects include heartburn, indigestion or pains in your stomach, and feeling sick or being sick. If these side effects are frequent or severe, you should stop taking the medicine and consult your doctor or pharmacist.

If you vomit any blood or dark particles that look like coffee grounds or have stained faeces (stools/motions): you should stop taking the medicines immediately and seek medical advice.

* Use of an anti-inflammatory medicine, even for a short period of time, can harm the kidneys. This is especially true in people with underlying kidney disease.
  + We would recommend a blood test to check your kidneys at least each year if you continue to take this medicine.