Acetaminophen Ingestion

You have taken an overdose of acetaminophen (Tylenol). This may be intentional or accidental. **This can cause serious liver damage and death**. Hepatitis, frequent alcohol use, or using large amounts of acetaminophen on a regular basis can put you at higher risk for serious liver damage and death. **The danger of acetaminophen overdose is that while you feel well, permanent damage may be done to your liver.**

There are three phases of acetaminophen overdose.

- At the start you may develop a painful stomach, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, and sweats.
- Following this you seem to feel better.
- The last phase can occur up to 3-5 days after the overdose. These symptoms of phase three include:
  - Tiredness.
  - Nausea.
  - Abdominal pain.
  - Confusion.
  - Evidence of liver damage.

TREATMENT

Treatment is based on the amount of acetaminophen in the body. Treatment of an overdose may include:

- Emptying the stomach.
- Giving charcoal by mouth.
- Giving an antidote.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Have follow-up liver enzyme levels as recommended by your caregiver.
- Take only medications as prescribed. Do not use medications until your caregiver says it is safe. Acetaminophen is often included in combination medicines used for pain.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Do not use alcohol. Avoid a high protein diet or as directed.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your condition gets worse.
- You develop abdominal pain.
- You vomit repeatedly.
- You become confused or less responsive.
- You seem to be getting worse in any way.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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