

Analgesic Encyclopedia Article

Analgesic by Confucius

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Analgesic

Analgesics are drugs used to control pain without producing loss of consciousness. Unlike anesthetics, which block all sensation, analgesics do not affect sensations other than pain. Mild analgesics, such as aspirin (e.g., Bayer, Bufferin), acetaminophen (Tylenol), and ibuprofen (Advil), work throughout the body at the source of pain. Researchers think acetaminophen may work at the nerve endings, dulling the sensation of pain. Ibuprofen and other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory agents interfere with the production of pain-causing chemicals. Opiate analgesics, such as codeine and morphine, work within the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord). Opiates work not by relieving the underlying reason for pain, but by changing the way the individual perceives pain. People who take opiates can become addicted to them, so these drugs require a doctor's prescription.

See Also

Opiate and Opioid Drug Abuse.