

Study: Tylenol, acetaminophen reduce empathy

Drug also can reduce joy, study says

BY: [Steve Schuster](#)

POSTED: 6:52 PM, May 17, 2016

UPDATED: 7:12 PM, May 17, 2016

[A study](#) released by Ohio State University (OSU) reveals an unexpected reaction to an over the counter drug you might have in your medicine cabinet right now.

Researchers say that when people take acetaminophen, the main ingredient in Tylenol, they're less likely to feel empathy toward others who were experiencing pain or suffering.

Acetaminophen is the most common drug ingredient in the United States, and is found in more than 600 medicines, according to the Consumer Health Care Production Association, a trade group.

- **[Wisconsin Communities Dominate "Drunkest Cities" Report](#)**

“These findings suggest other people’s pain doesn’t seem as big of a deal to you when you’ve taken acetaminophen,” said Dominik Mischkowski, co-author of the study.

The effects of the drug can influence both professional and personal relationships.

“Empathy is important. If you are having an argument with your spouse and you just took acetaminophen, this research suggests you might be less understanding of what you did to hurt your spouse’s feelings,” said Baldwin Way, an assistant psychology professor at OSU, who also worked on the study.

An early study by university academics also found that the drug can reduce feelings of joy.

Taking into account the findings from both studies, “there’s a lot we need to learn about

one of the most popular over-the-counter drugs in the United States,” said Jeff Grabmeier with OSU.

For more information about the study, [click here](#).

Copyright 2015 Scripps Media, Inc. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.