

The real dope on aspirin

TORONTO (CUP) --

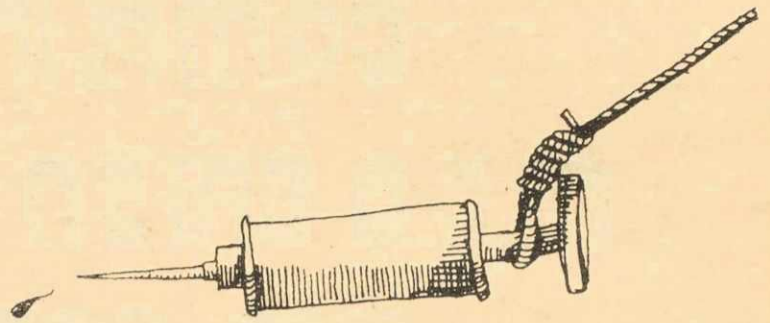
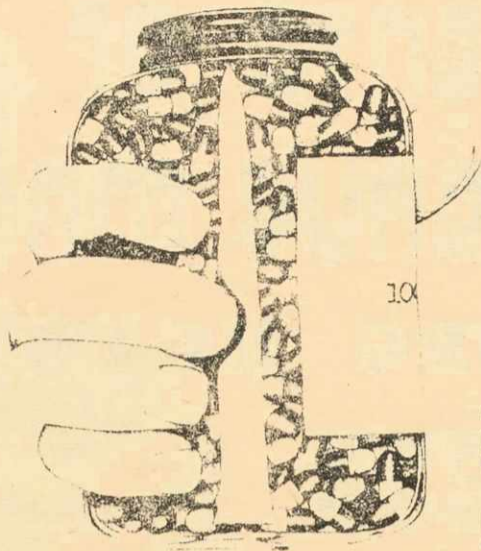
The most common of all non-prescription drugs, considering it in all of its various disguises, is aspirin. It can be bought in plain or buffered, effervescent and non-effervescent combinations with other drugs, and in 'specially formulated' remedies for arthritis and rheumatism, colds and depression.

The big difference among the myriad brands of aspirin, plain or buffered, is the price. Aspirin is chemically known as Acetylsalicylic acid (ASA). It is effective in any of its forms in reducing fever and inflammation and relieving tension headaches, muscles aches and symptoms of rheumatism. For some people, it acts as a mild sedative. If you pay more than what the cheapest brand of ASA tablets cost, you are paying more than you need to.

The most common side effect of aspirin is stomach irritation. This irritation is more common among people who take a lot of aspirin. Chronic users of aspirin often end up with gastric or intestinal bleeding. Anyone suffering from or suspecting ulcers or very acidic stomachs should stay away from aspirin. Taking an aspirin on a full stomach or drinking a glass of water with each dose can reduce the stomach upset. Alcohol as well as caffeine in coffee and tea acts with the aspirin lining irritation, so it is a good idea to stay away from them.

Some drug companies combine aspirin with antacids to provide a buffering action to combat stomach irritation. The minute amount of antacid in these preparations is firstly, not worth the high price charged and secondly, of little value in actually relieving stomach irritation. Stomach discomfort is affected more by the amount of food in the stomach, and the emotional state of the user.

All aspirin, including the buffering kind, can cause stomach bleeding within a few days when taken at a level of 18 per day (a level not uncommon for people with an acutely painful condition). Enteric-coated aspirin which does not dissolve in the stomach is available at most pharmacies, and is worth a try if you need to take a lot of aspirin, even if small doses bring on stomach upset.



oral anti-diabetic drugs, thus creating a danger of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar level).

Acetaminophen, known to shoppers as Tyenol and Vanquish, is often used as a substitute for aspirin. It also relieves pain and

fever, as aspirin does, but has no ability to relieve inflammation which is why it is of no help to the basic source of arthritic pain. Acetaminophen has not shown itself to be significantly easier on people's stomachs than plain aspirin.

In addition to stomach irritations, aspirin's side effects include allergies. Although aspirin sensitivity varies greatly in severity, anyone with any of the following reactions should avoid aspirin like the plague. Hives, swelling of the mucous membranes and difficult breathing can be some of the effects.

Many persons have discovered that aspirin can be habit forming especially when used to treat every little ache and pain. Aspirin addicted people are known to be high strung and disoriented. They often hear ringing in their ears, and feel dizzy.

Aspirin blocks the effects of mild or severe can be accomplished with as little as 30 tablets (L50). The lethal dose is much less if alcohol or other depressant or toxic drugs have been taken.

There are too many drugs that should not be used in combination with aspirin to list here, but the following are a few examples to watch for. When you get a prescription or buy any over the counter drugs, check with your doctor or druggist for advice on what to avoid. When in doubt, stick to one thing at a time.

Aspirin blocks the effects of Benemid, a drug used to cure gout. It is also used in conjunction with high dosages of antibiotics, often given before penicillin treatment for gonorrhea, to increase the absorption of penicillin into the blood stream.

Aspirins increase the effects of

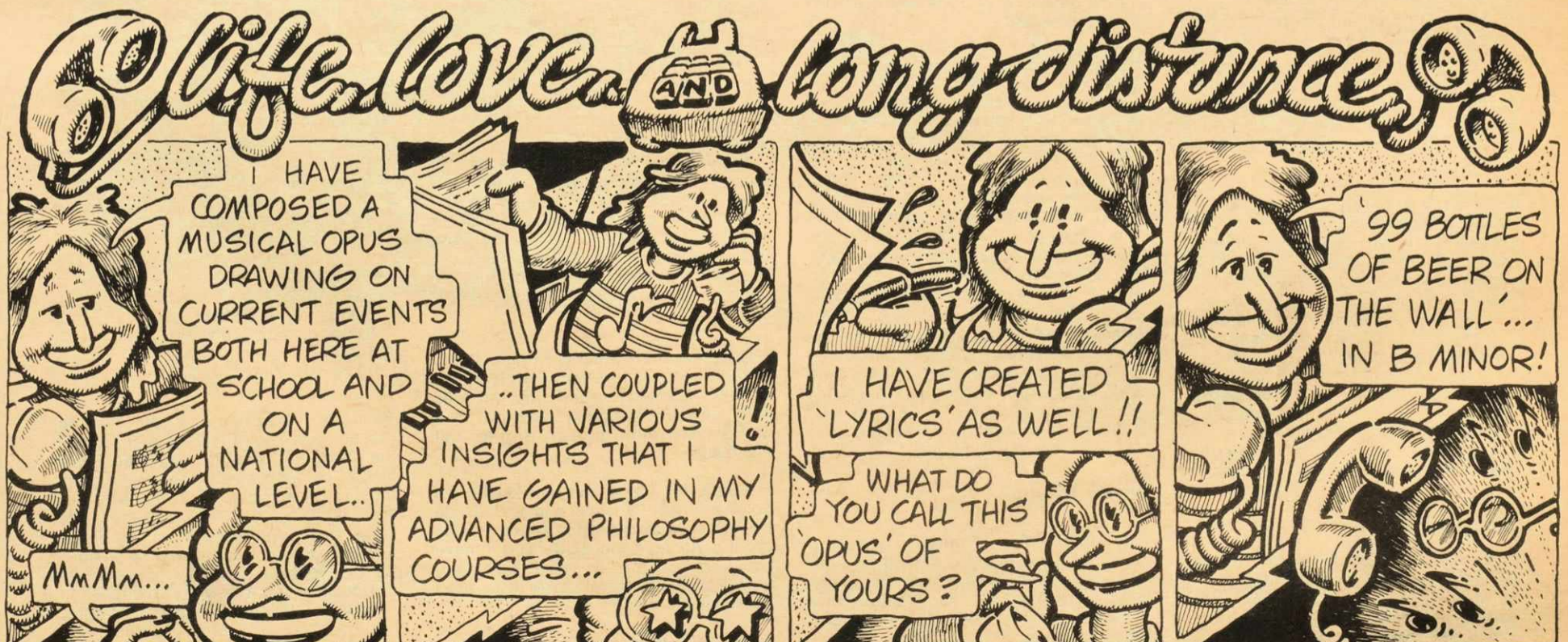
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