

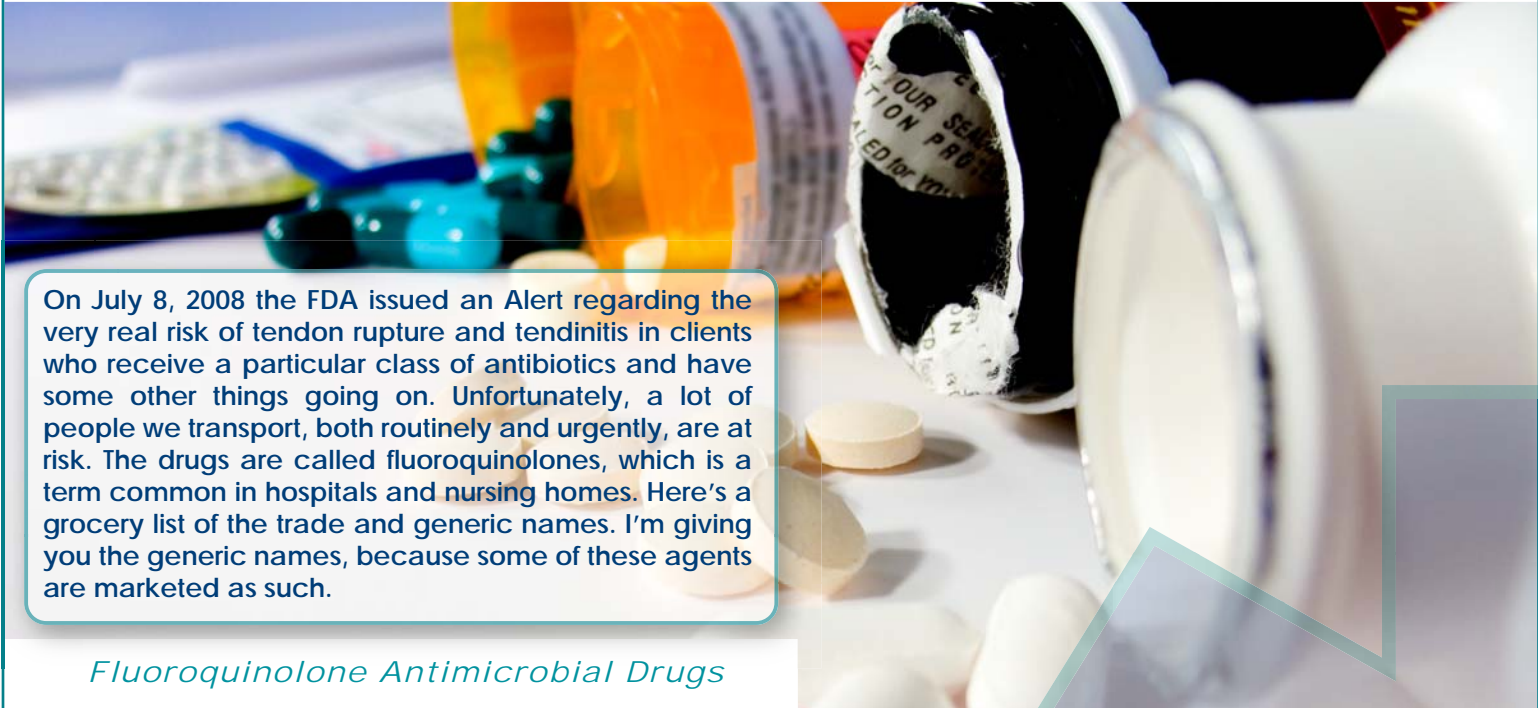


VITALS

A Weekly Safety Newsletter For Medical Transport Professionals

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FDA Alert: Antibiotics & Tendon Rupture



On July 8, 2008 the FDA issued an Alert regarding the very real risk of tendon rupture and tendinitis in clients who receive a particular class of antibiotics and have some other things going on. Unfortunately, a lot of people we transport, both routinely and urgently, are at risk. The drugs are called fluoroquinolones, which is a term common in hospitals and nursing homes. Here's a grocery list of the trade and generic names. I'm giving you the generic names, because some of these agents are marketed as such.

Fluoroquinolone Antimicrobial Drugs

Generic	Trade Names
Ciprofloxacin	Cipro, Cipro XR, Proquin XR
Gemifloxacin	Factive
Levofloxacin	Levaquin
Moxifloxacin	Avelox
Norfloxacin	Noroxin
Ofloxacin	Floxin



The tendon most likely to rupture or become inflamed is the Achilles tendon. However, tendonitis and tendon rupture have been reported in the rotator cuff, the hand, biceps and thumb. It is important to note that the tendon difficulties can occur not only while the client is receiving these agents, but also up to several months to over a year after completion of therapy.

The FDA recommends that at the first sign of tendon pain, swelling or inflammation, the client stops taking the medicine, avoid exercising or using the affected area, and contact their doctor immediately.

This is really just another reminder that we need to handle everybody with care, be really judicious in how we assist people, and really be careful in deciding to let somebody ambulate. Remember a tendon can pop months to over a year after the client has stopped taking these drugs.

Did you notice the "floxacin" in each of the generic names?

Clients at risk for tendon rupture and tendinitis while taking these drugs:

- Over 60 Years of Age
- Taking Steroids
- Are a kidney, heart or lung transplant recipient
- Have a history of tendon problems in the past, such as with rheumatoid arthritis
- Have kidney failure

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