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Meloxicam vs. Celebrex: How Do They Compare for Pain and Inflammation?



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Key takeaways:

- Meloxicam (Mobic) and celecoxib (Celebrex) are prescription-only medications that help relieve pain and inflammation. They're commonly used to treat conditions like osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.
- Meloxicam and Celebrex work slightly differently in the body than other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). They're similarly effective as other NSAIDs for pain relief.
- Meloxicam and Celebrex are both available in generic forms. Meloxicam typically costs less than generic Celebrex, making it a more affordable option. But there are still [ways to save](#) on both medications.

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Trying to figure out the right medication to take for pain can be challenging. You want something that will not only take away your pain, but will also help with [inflammation](#) (swelling). The over-the-counter [pain relievers](#) you've tried so far haven't worked. Well, it might be time to talk to your healthcare provider about the other options available.

Here, we'll compare two of the many nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs ([NSAIDs](#)) that may be possible options to treat your pain and inflammation: [meloxicam](#) (Mobic) and [celecoxib](#) (Celebrex).

What is meloxicam?

Meloxicam is a [prescription-only NSAID](#) prescribed for pain and inflammation. It comes available as an oral tablet, capsule, or liquid. Meloxicam tablets are available as both a brand-name (sold as Mobic) and [generic medication](#). But the oral capsules and liquid are only available as generic products.

What conditions is meloxicam approved to treat?

Meloxicam is [FDA-approved to treat](#) the following conditions:

- [Osteoarthritis](#) (OA) in adults
- [Rheumatoid arthritis](#) (RA) in adults
- Juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA) for children [ages 2 and older](#)

What is Celebrex?

Celebrex is a prescription-only NSAID prescribed [for pain and inflammation](#). Although available as a generic (called celecoxib), many people still refer to this medication by its brand name. Celebrex only comes as an oral capsule.

What conditions is Celebrex approved to treat?

Celebrex is [FDA-approved](#) for more health conditions than meloxicam:

- OA

- RA
- JRA for children ages 2 and older
- [Ankylosing spondylitis](#) (AS)
- Acute (sudden) pain
- Primary [dysmenorrhea](#) (painful menstrual periods)

How do meloxicam and Celebrex work for pain and inflammation?

To understand how NSAIDs work for pain and inflammation, first, you have to understand what causes these symptoms. There's an enzyme (protein) in our bodies called [cyclooxygenase](#) (COX). COX is important for helping us heal when we're injured or sick. It does this by making hormones, called [prostaglandins](#).

There are two main types of COX enzymes in the body: COX-1 and COX-2. COX-1 helps us form blood clots to stop bleeding. It also plays a role in protecting our stomach, intestines, and kidneys. COX-2 helps create fever, pain, and swelling when our bodies think we're hurt

or sick. NSAIDs block COX enzymes and help lower the amount of prostaglandins produced. This helps reduce fever, pain, and inflammation.

Many NSAIDs, like [ibuprofen](#) (Advil, Motrin), block both COX-1 and COX-2 equally. They're known as non-selective NSAIDs. Because they block COX-1, this can sometimes cause [stomach-related side effects](#) or [kidney damage](#). It can also raise the risk for [serious bleeding](#).

Meloxicam and Celebrex affect the COX enzymes a bit differently. Meloxicam [blocks COX-2 more](#) than COX-1. And Celebrex is considered [COX-2 selective](#), meaning it blocks very little COX-1. Because meloxicam and Celebrex have less of an effect on COX-1, they may have lower risks of stomach-related side effects than other NSAIDs.

How are meloxicam and Celebrex dosed and given?

Meloxicam [doses](#) for adults range from 5 mg to 15 mg once daily. Meloxicam are available in 5 mg and 10 mg capsules, as well as 7.5 mg and 15 mg tablets.

The exact dose is based on the form of meloxicam you're taking and the health condition being treated. [Doses for children](#) are based on the child's body weight. If you're taking liquid meloxicam, be sure to shake the bottle well each time before measuring out the medication.

Celebrex may be taken [once or twice a day](#) as directed by your healthcare provider. Celebrex is available from 50 mg to 400 mg. If you have [trouble swallowing](#) your Celebrex capsules, you can open them and sprinkle the contents over a teaspoonful of cold or room temperature applesauce. You should take the applesauce mixture right away with water. But if you need to, you can store the mixture for up to 6 hours in the refrigerator.

Meloxicam and standard Celebrex doses can be taken with or without food. But you may want to eat before taking these medications to lower the chance of stomach upset.

How effective are Meloxicam and Celebrex for treating pain?

Meloxicam and Celebrex are both effective options for treating pain.

In a review of 13 [clinical trials](#), all NSAIDs were found to be similarly effective for relieving chronic lower [back pain](#). This included meloxicam and Celebrex. One study included in the

review also found Celebrex to be more effective than [tramadol](#) (Ultram), an [opioid](#) pain reliever.

Celebrex has also been compared to ibuprofen for OA knee pain. Researchers found it was [just as effective](#) as ibuprofen for pain relief. But it had a lower risk of stomach-related side effects.

Another review of 24 studies compared meloxicam, Celebrex, and three other NSAIDs for [gout](#) pain. Researchers found that [all NSAIDs were effective](#) for relieving pain. But in some of the studies reviewed, NSAIDs like Celebrex were slightly more effective than certain other NSAIDs.

What are the side effects of meloxicam and Celebrex?

Since meloxicam and Celebrex are both NSAIDs, they share many of the same side effects. The most common [meloxicam side effects](#) and [Celebrex side effects](#) include:

- Diarrhea
- Flu-like symptoms
- [Upset stomach](#)
- [Upper respiratory tract infections](#)

All NSAIDs, including meloxicam and Celebrex, have a [boxed warning](#) (the FDA's strictest warning) about the risk of severe gastrointestinal (the stomach and intestines) side effects, such as [ulcers](#) or bleeding. Meloxicam and Celebrex also include boxed warnings for a higher risk of [heart attacks](#) or strokes.

Other serious side effects of NSAIDs include:

- [High blood pressure](#)
- [Kidney damage](#)
- Serious skin reactions, such as [Stevens-Johnson syndrome](#)
- Worsening of asthma for people with [aspirin allergies](#)

What interactions do meloxicam and Celebrex have?

[Meloxicam interactions](#) and [Celebrex interactions](#) are similar. Below are some of the most notable interactions. But be sure to share an updated [medication list](#) with your healthcare provider and pharmacist. They'll more thoroughly check for potential interactions.

Certain medications can [raise your risk of bleeding](#) when taken with meloxicam or Celebrex, such as:

- [Warfarin](#) (Coumadin, Jantoven)
- [Aspirin](#) and other NSAIDs, like ibuprofen
- Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors ([SSRIs](#)), like [sertraline](#) (Zoloft)
- Serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors ([SNRIs](#)), like [venlafaxine](#)

Other potential medication interactions include:

- Angiotensin-converting-enzyme inhibitors ([ACE inhibitors](#)), like [lisinopril](#) (Zestril)
- Angiotensin II receptor blockers ([ARBs](#)), like [losartan](#) (Cozaar)
- [Cyclosporine](#) (Gengraf, Neoral, [Sandimmune](#))
- [Digoxin](#) (Lanoxin) — *interacts with Celebrex but not meloxicam*
- [Fluconazole](#) (Diflucan) — *interacts with Celebrex but not meloxicam*
- [Lithium](#) (Lithobid)
- [Methotrexate](#) (Trexall, Xatmep)
- [Rifampin](#) — *interacts with Celebrex but not meloxicam*

How to save on meloxicam and Celebrex

Even though both medications have generic versions available, there's still a difference between their costs. Meloxicam is generally more affordable than celecoxib (generic Celebrex) without insurance. Using a GoodRx coupon with your prescription is one of the easiest ways you can save money. For example, 30 tablets of meloxicam 15 mg may cost

[around \\$5](#) at certain pharmacies. At some pharmacies, you can get 30 capsules of generic Celebrex 200 mg for [less than \\$11](#).

If your healthcare provider decides you should take brand-name Celebrex, a [manufacturer copay card](#) may help you save. For people with commercial insurance, your prescription may cost as little as [\\$4 a month](#) with the copay card. If you don't have insurance, this copay card can take \$200 off the price of your prescription.

Can you take meloxicam and Celebrex together for pain?

No, you shouldn't. Since meloxicam and Celebrex are both NSAIDs, you should only take one or the other for pain. Taking meloxicam and Celebrex together raises your risk of side effects without improving your pain relief.

The bottom line

Meloxicam and Celebrex are prescription-only NSAIDs commonly prescribed to treat pain and inflammation due to arthritis. Many studies have shown meloxicam and Celebrex to be as effective as other NSAIDs for pain and inflammation. But some studies show Celebrex might work better than other NSAIDs in some cases.

Tell your healthcare provider about other medications you're taking and other health conditions you have. Be sure to discuss any concerns you have about cost when deciding which medication is right for you. But remember to check with GoodRx to see if it can help you save on your prescription.

References

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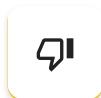
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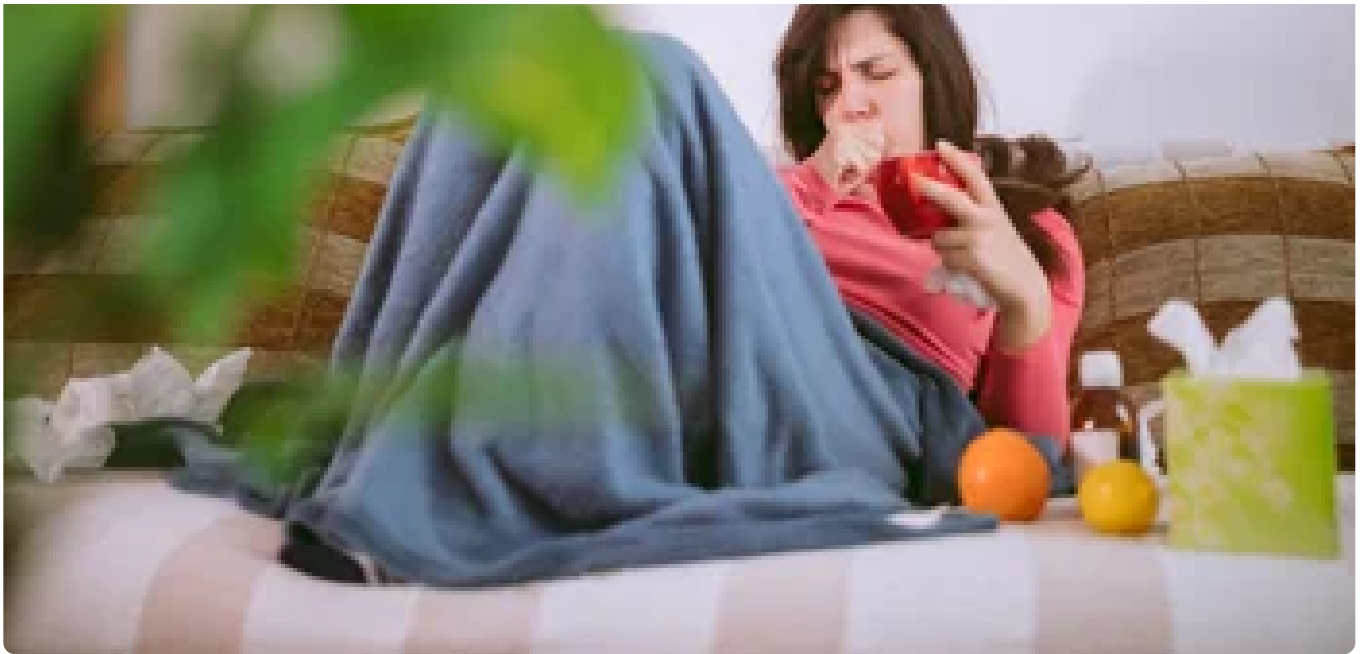
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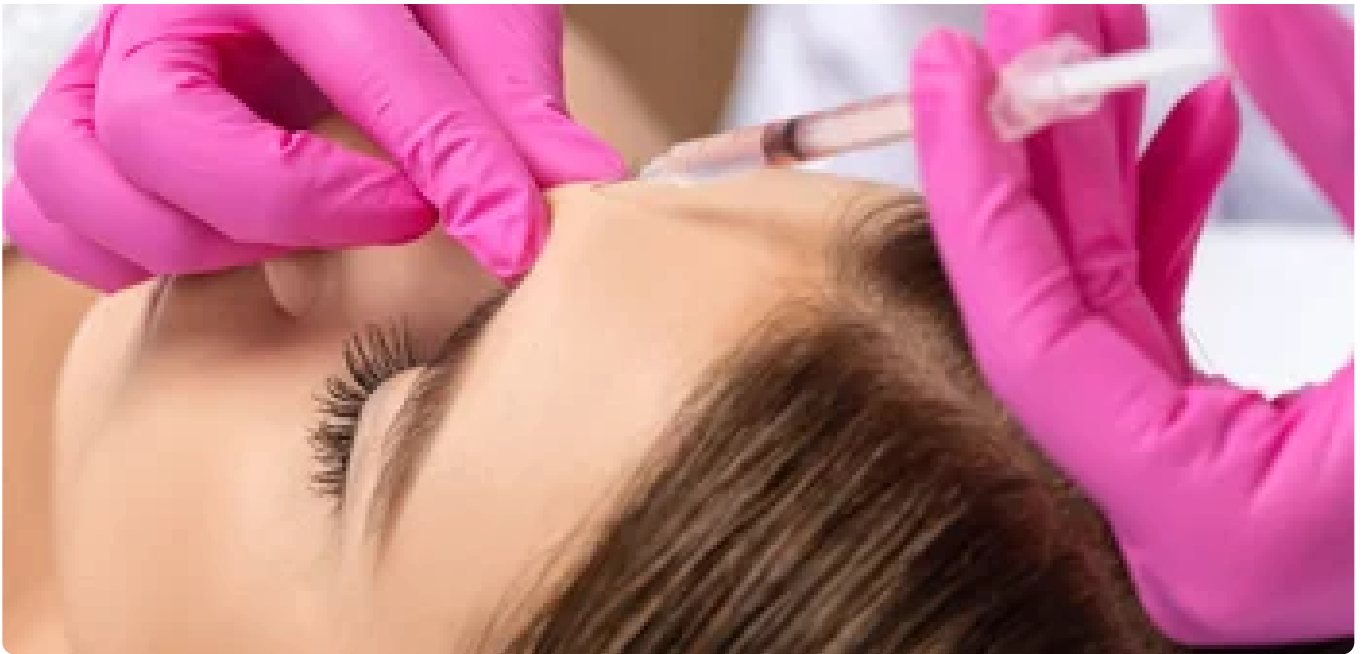




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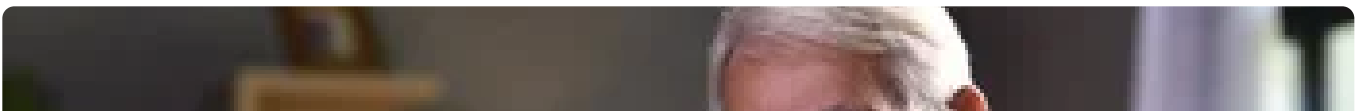
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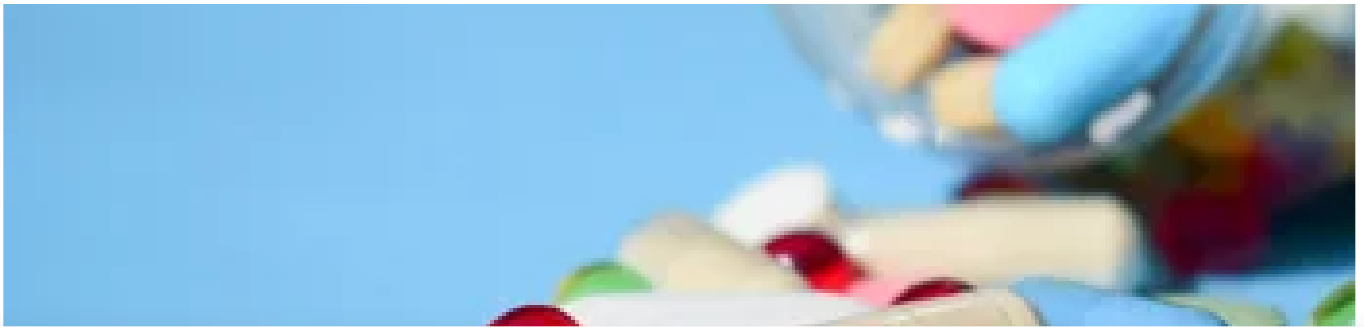
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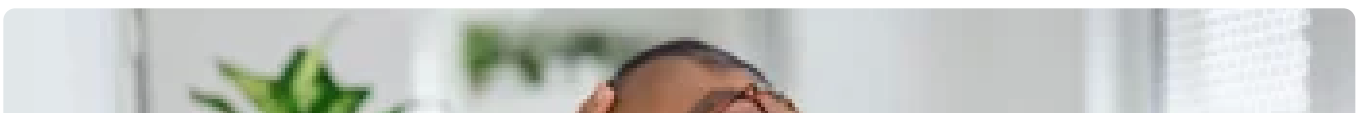
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