

[IMAGE]

## The Problem With Daily Aspirin

By Editorial Staff

Daily low-dose aspirin is increasingly recommended as a way to reduce heart attack and stroke risk, even in healthy people - but it comes with a risk of its own: gastrointestinal bleeding. Participants in the Aspirin in Reducing Events in the Elderly (ASPREE) trial who took daily aspirin had a significantly higher risk of GI bleeding, without improvements in disability-free survival compared to nonusers. In other words, taking aspirin didn't make them any less likely to suffer a heart attack or stroke, but did make them more likely to experience GI bleeding.

The study, published in the research journal *Gut*, involved nearly 20,000 elderly adults (ages 70 and older) who took 100 mg of aspirin daily or a placebo for comparison. Aspirin use increased serious GI bleeding (particularly upper-GI bleeding) by 60 percent compared to nonuse, with several fatalities as a result. In fact, GI bleeding – and lack of preventive benefit from taking aspirin – was so significant that researchers stopped the trial early.

Before you take aspirin daily or intermittently for pain relief, heart health or any other reason, talk to your doctor about nondrug ways to maximize your health and wellness. Proper diet, consistent physical activity, stress management and other variables all have research support when it comes to keeping your heart healthy - *without* the risk of GI bleeding.

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