

HEALTH Q&A

Heartening News About Aspirin

(NAPSA)—When it comes to combatting America's number one killer, one of the most powerful weapons may already be in your home. The killer is Cardiovascular Disease (CVD), and the answer, in many cases, may be low-dose aspirin.

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, studies have shown that aspirin can reduce the risk of a second heart attack or stroke. Studies are underway to see if aspirin can prevent a first heart attack or stroke; some doctors recommend aspirin to certain patients who are at risk.

It's important to talk to your health professional before taking aspirin for CVD prevention.

Here are some frequently asked questions and answers about aspirin:

Q. Are all pain killers, or analgesics, the same?

A. No. There are many types that work in different ways in the body. Some are more appropriate than others for certain conditions.

Q. How do I know which analgesic is right for me?

A. Talk with a health professional: doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

Q. Do other pain killers reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke?

A. Only aspirin (salicylic acid) has been proven effective. Read the label to make sure you are taking aspirin.

Q. Can I take just any aspirin?

A. Consult your health professional. There are different varieties of aspirin. For example, enteric-coated aspirin is designed to dissolve more slowly to avoid stomach upset. Buffered aspirin



With your doctor's help, you may reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke by taking an aspirin a day.

contains antacids to neutralize the stomach acid that causes upset. Read the labels.

Q. What's the right dose?

A. Studies suggest a low dose (81 mg. a day). Most aspirin come in 325 mg. or 500 mg. doses. Look for a product with the dose recommended by your health professional.

Q. What about side effects or interactions with other medicines?

A. As with any medication, you should tell your healthcare provider about any over-the-counter and prescription medicines and dietary supplements (vitamins, minerals, herbals) you take. Certain medications and dietary supplements may interact with aspirin and cause serious problems. Always read the labels of all your medicines to check for side effects and interaction warnings.

This advice comes from the experts at the National Consumers League. You can learn more on the Web at www.nclnet.org.