



spotlight on health

Pain Relievers and Aspirin Therapy

(NAPSA)—For millions of Americans, the benefits of aspirin go beyond simple pain relief. Taken regularly as directed by a physician, an 81 mg or “low dose” aspirin can help prevent one out of three heart attacks. But if you’re using low-dose aspirin therapy and need to choose an over-the-counter (OTC) pain reliever to treat your everyday aches and pains, experts say you should understand some important facts.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) advises patients who take low-dose aspirin to prevent heart attacks that taking ibuprofen, a commonly-used OTC pain reliever and the active ingredient in several leading brands, can actually interfere with aspirin’s effectiveness.

Research Findings

A recent telephone survey conducted by TSC, a division of Yankelovich, found that nearly half (43 percent) of those polled taking aspirin therapy said they used ibuprofen to treat their aches and pains. Of this group, two-thirds (66 percent) stated they were unaware of the FDA’s warning about ibuprofen.

Research shows that ibuprofen

may interfere with aspirin’s ability to prevent platelets in the blood from forming harmful clots. The American Heart Association defines platelets as an element in

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the blood that aid blood clotting. When platelets accumulate, they can cause clotting in the arteries, which can lead to a heart attack or stroke. By interfering with the way in which aspirin works to stop platelets from clotting, ibuprofen may reduce the life-saving benefits of their low-dose aspirin therapy.

Learn More

If you have questions about which pain reliever is right for you, talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.