

Aspirin for Prevention



Should I take aspirin to help prevent a heart attack or stroke? Ask your health care provider if taking aspirin is right for you.

HOW DOES ASPIRIN HELP PREVENT A HEART ATTACK OR STROKE?

A heart attack occurs when blood flow to the heart is stopped. A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is stopped. Plaque build-up and a blood clot in an artery cause the flow of blood to stop. Aspirin may help some people in keeping blood clots from forming.

WHO SHOULD TAKE ASPIRIN TO HELP PREVENT A HEART ATTACK OR STROKE?

The risks and benefits of daily low-dose aspirin therapy are different for each person. If you have had a heart attack or stroke, your doctor may recommend daily aspirin to help prevent another one. If you have not had one, aspirin therapy is not recommended unless in certain select people. This is due to the risk of gastrointestinal bleeding. Your doctor will consider your risk factors for heart attack or stroke before recommending aspirin.

LOWER RISK OF A HEART ATTACK OR STROKE

- If you use tobacco, quit!
- Get to and stay at a healthy weight.
- Do regular physical activity.
- Get your blood pressure checked as advised by your health care provider. If you have high blood pressure, follow your treatment plan to control your blood pressure.
- If you have diabetes, follow your treatment plan to keep your blood sugar under control.
- Get checked for atrial fibrillation. This is a type of irregular heart beat. If you have this problem, take medication and follow your provider's advice to reduce your risk for a stroke.
- If you do take daily aspirin, ask your health care provider what side effects to look for and which ones to let them know about. Remember, taking aspirin every day is not recommended for everyone.

