

LONG-TERM ASPIRIN USE ASSOCIATED WITH LOWER RISK OF DYING FROM CANCER

From Dr. Victor Sternberg

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A recent article confirmed what I have suspected for a long time based upon other studies. A study involving 86,000 women and 43,000 men at Mass General Hospital and Harvard Medical School revealed that a daily 81 mg. aspirin appeared to reduce the overall mortality risks from cancer. The benefit of taking a daily 81 mg. aspirin was significant.

This was first noted in physicians who had been taking aspirin daily to prevent cardiovascular disease. This 81 mg. tablet was not high enough to cause bleeding but low enough to interfere with the formation of clots and/or heart attacks.

The study emphasized that the low-dose aspirin has an anti-inflammatory quality which may have an effect upon cancer growth. In addition, the slight anticoagulatory effect may prevent the breaking away of cancer cells and spreading to other parts of the body.

Overall mortality risk was 7% lower for women and 15% lower for men. The greatest reduction was found in colorectal cancer where there is a 31% reduction for women and 30% reduction in men who took aspirin regularly. Women also had 11% lower incidence of dying from breast cancer and men had a 23% less chance of dying from prostate cancer.

While aspirin has been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease and strokes, it is now looked at as a more profound preventive measure.

Interestingly enough, if a pharmaceutical company came out with a drug that would have similar effects, it would be a very expensive medication because of the profound preventive benefits. In this case, there is no economic value tied to this regimen so it has not been well publicized.

Yours truly,
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