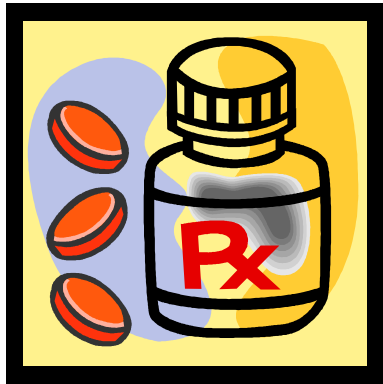


Do you have any unwanted drugs or medication? Then please return them to your usual pharmacy so they can be disposed of properly. Do not flush them down the toilet or tip them into the sink.



Did you know that in an average size practice like ours, unused drugs cost the NHS more than £30,000 a year! This is because medication is often changed or the dosages altered. Please only order sufficient quantities to meet your immediate needs. Unused drugs have to be destroyed and cannot be re-issued.

Thank you.

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A Handy Sheet About...

Aspirin To Prevent Blood Clots

About one in four heart attacks and strokes may be prevented by aspirin.

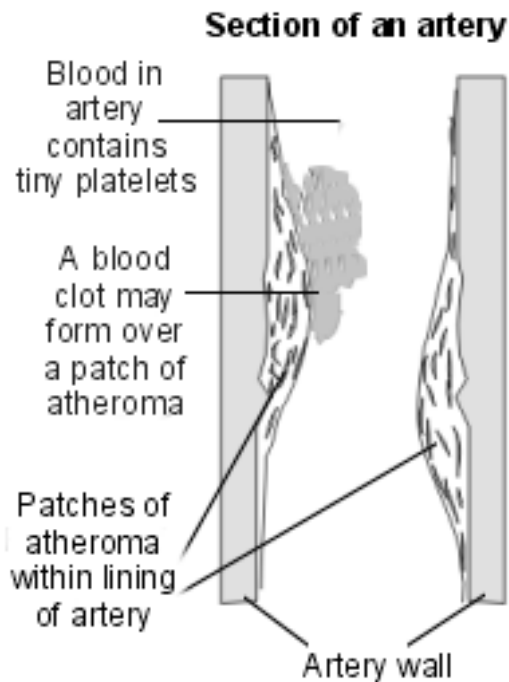
A daily low dose of aspirin lowers the risk of having a heart attack or stroke if you have:

- ❖ Angina.
- ❖ A previous heart attack (myocardial infarction).
- ❖ Peripheral vascular disease.
- ❖ A previous stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA).
- ❖ Certain other heart and blood vessel conditions.

The usual dose is 75 mg. This is a lot less than the dose for pain relief. If you need to take painkillers (eg for headaches) it is best to take alternative painkillers such as paracetamol.

How does aspirin work?

Aspirin helps to prevent blood clots. A blood clot may form in an artery (blood vessel) if a lot of platelets stick onto some atheroma. A clot in an artery may stop blood flowing to the



tissues 'downstream'. If a blood clot forms in an artery in the heart or brain, it may cause a heart attack or stroke.

Atheroma patches are like fatty lumps that develop in the inside lining of some arteries. This mainly occurs in older people and is sometimes called 'hardening of the arteries'.

Platelets are tiny particles in the blood that help the blood to clot when a blood vessel is cut. Platelets sometimes stick onto atheroma inside an artery.

Low dose aspirin reduces the 'stickiness' of platelets. This helps to stop platelets sticking to a patch of atheroma and forming a blood clot.

Are there any side effects from low dose aspirin?

- Most people do not have any side-effects as the dose is small.
- An uncommon side-effect is bleeding in the stomach or guts. This is more common if you have a stomach or duodenal ulcer. If you take aspirin, see a doctor soon if you have a persistent stomach upset or pain, blood in vomit, or black faeces (stools).
- Rarely, some people are allergic to aspirin.
- Aspirin sometimes makes breathing symptoms worse if you have asthma.

Conclusion

Aspirin is an important part of the treatment for certain conditions. However, it is no substitute for preventing atheroma from developing. If possible, you should also reduce any 'risk factors'. For example: do not smoke; exercise regularly; eat a low fat diet;

Obtaining Aspirin

Aspirin is an over the counter product available either with or without prescription.

Unless you hold a prescription payment exemption certificate it is unlikely you will want to obtain this under prescription as it will be cheaper to buy it than pay the standard prescription charge.

Questions I need to ask my GP/Nurse:

My Next Appointment:

Date	Time	To See

Please remember to let your GP know when you start or stop any medication.