

AN ASPIRIN A DAY... *for heart attack prevention?*

HEALTH ISSUES ©

According to the Center for Disease Control, over 50 million Americans take aspirin for the prevention of heart disease. It is frequently prescribed for this purpose.

An extensive campaign launched by the drug industry featured a Physicians Health Group study which concluded that an aspirin a day was an effective preventative treatment against heart attacks.

What the study failed to mention was that it was conducted with **buffered aspirin containing magnesium**. Magnesium is a valuable mineral which has long been associated with the prevention of heart attacks. Follow-up studies revealed that aspirin alone did nothing to prevent heart attacks.

A study in the International Journal of Epidemiology reported that serum magnesium levels are inversely related to the risk of death from ischemic heart disease.

Serum magnesium concentration, independent of other risk factors, was inversely associated with death from all causes and from heart disease.

Ford, E.S. "Serum magnesium and ischemic heart disease: findings from a national sample of U.S. adults."
International Journal of Epidemiology, Vol. 28, 645-651

A study in the Lancet reported that magnesium deficiency may also be implicated in coronary heart disease when it was revealed that injections of magnesium sulfate brought about **dramatic clinical improvement** in patients suffering from heart disease and in many cases the lipoprotein levels were brought back to normal levels.

Williams, R. "Nutrition against disease"
1971, Pitman Publishing Co.

"Some physicians contend that the evidence of aspirin's efficacy for prevention is overstated..."

...and that its risks are underestimated. Dr. John Cleland, said that his interpretation of the data shows that the therapy reduces only the number of diagnosed heart attacks, not attacks overall. He explained that aspirin merely masks heart attacks, producing a "cosmetic" blip in epidemiological statistics. Because aspirin can be an analgesic, it may further mask those symptoms."

Gensenway, D. "Do your patients need aspirin therapy," ACP-ASIM Annals of Internal Medicine, March 2002

The major study on which most recommendations are based did not utilize aspirin alone; therefore, the calcium and magnesium present in the buffered aspirin actually taken may have been responsible for some of the beneficial effects. Supplemental magnesium and vitamin E have been shown to be more effective than aspirin in lowering heart attack rates as well as overall death rates.

Kaufman, J. "Should you take aspirin to prevent heart attacks." Scientific Exploration, Vol. 14, #4 2002