

## HOW TO TAKE ASPIRIN

Aspirin is used to treat a wide variety of heart and blood vessel diseases in addition to its pain relieving effects.

It is best to take aspirin according to the following routine:

- ♥ Take the medication as you are directed by your physician. Aspirin is less likely to bother your stomach if you take it with food.
- ♥ Carefully check the expiration date on the aspirin bottle. If it expired then it should be replaced.
- ♥ If you forget a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, wait until then and take the next regularly scheduled dose. Do not take extra aspirin to make up a missed dose. Do not stop aspirin without approval from your physician.
- ♥ Read labels on over-the-counter pain relievers as they may contain aspirin. Ask your physician or pharmacist for advice on medication you should use aspirin to treat mild pain or fever. An alternative pain reliever may be needed.
- ♥ Try to avoid taking ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) if you are taking aspirin. Ibuprofen can make aspirin less effective in protecting your heart and blood vessels. If both medications must be taken, take the ibuprofen at least 8 hours before or 30 minutes after taking aspirin.
- ♥ If you are pregnant or planning a pregnancy, then check with your physician to see if you should be taking aspirin or not.
- ♥ If you have asthma, stomach ulcers, liver or kidney disease or a blood clotting disorder, your physician may adjust your aspirin dose or order tests that help to take aspirin safely.
- ♥ Most people take aspirin without side effects. The most common side effects of aspirin are easy bruising and stomach pain. Bleeding is a potentially serious side effect from aspirin. Avoiding or limiting alcohol will decrease the risk of stomach bleeding. If you see blood in the urine, blood in the stool, or dark, tarry stools stop taking aspirin and contact you physician right away.

We are pleased to answer your questions or discuss your condition with other health care professionals.

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