

Preventing cancer with aspirin – new tricks from an old dog

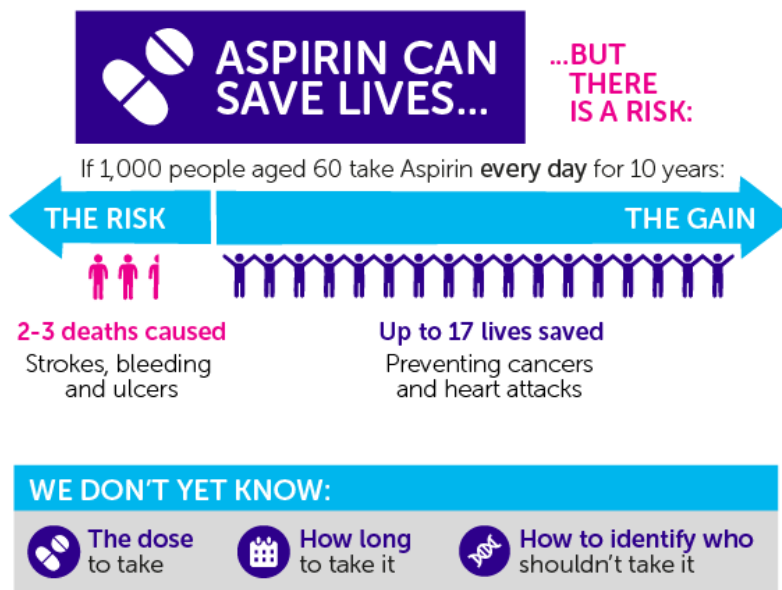
Background

The cancer burden is expected to increase in Europe from 3.6 million cases in 2015 to 4.3 million cases by 2035; an increase of approximately 20% or roughly 716,000 new cases. This anticipated trend is due partly to population aging and demographics, but also to lifestyle changes with increasing prevalence of risk factors, such as tobacco use, obesity and physical inactivity.

One particular cancer whose incidence is projected to increase dramatically in the near future as a result of demographic and life-style changes, is colorectal cancer (CRC). CRC is a life-threatening disease with high incidence, morbidity, and mortality. Several lifestyle-related factors, such as diet, weight, alcohol use, and physical activity, have been linked to colorectal cancer.

Several randomized clinical trials have indicated that aspirin prevents colorectal polyps (advanced colorectal polyps are a major risk factor) as well as colorectal cancer. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) concluded that aspirin reduces the risk of colorectal cancer by 40 percent as well as recurrence of advanced polyps.

Why aren't we using it then?



(adapted from Cancer Research UK)

Our lab has projects looking at all 3 of these unknowns. But we are also interested in finding out how aspirin works. In other words, *what is the mechanism of action behind aspirin and prevention of colorectal cancer?* And if this is the project for you we would like to hear from you.

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