



Thrombosis Canada



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Aspirin®

Also Known As: ASA, Acetylsalicylic Acid

What is Aspirin®?

Aspirin®, although commonly known as an analgesic, anti-inflammatory medication, is now more commonly used to prevent certain types of blood clots, by interfering with the clotting effect of the blood platelets.

You are taking Aspirin® for:

- Prevention of a heart attack or stroke
- Coronary stents
- Mechanical heart valve
- Coronary artery bypass
- Vascular graft
- Other _____

Your dose of Aspirin® is:

- _____



What if you miss a dose?

Aspirin® is usually taken once a day. If you miss a dose:

- Within 8 hours of usually taking it, take the missed dose and then continue with your regular dosing
- More than 8 hours of usually taking it, skip that dose and then take the next dose at the usual time
- Do not take two doses at the same time; it is not necessary or recommended

Does Aspirin® have side effects and what should you do about them?

Most patients do not experience side effects with these doses of the drug. Stop the drug and call your doctor, or go to an Emergency Department if you experience:

- Wheezing or difficulty breathing
- Stomach pain/vomiting blood
- Black stools from upper intestinal bleeding
- Severe headache accompanied by nausea

What should you discuss with your health care providers?

- Be sure to tell your health care providers that you are taking Aspirin® if you need surgery or a biopsy, as you may need to stop the Aspirin® for procedures that would put you at risk of major bleeding. Aspirin® does not have to be stopped for minor procedures

THE RISK OF STOPPING ASPIRIN® MAY BE GREATER THAN THE RISK OF BLEEDING.



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Are there any other special issues with Aspirin®?

- For patients over 70 years of age or who have had a previous peptic ulcer, an anti-ulcer medication (e.g.: omeprazole [Losec®]) should also be taken/started along with the Aspirin®
- Aspirin® is sometimes combined with another anti-platelet drug; if you already take or will start taking an anticoagulant drug, such as warfarin, you should discuss with your health care provider the need for, and the safety of, continuing the Aspirin®

Take Away Message

- Aspirin® reduces your risk of developing certain types of blood clots that could be fatal
- It should generally be taken daily
- The risk of stopping the drug before a procedure may be greater than the risk of bleeding from the procedure
- Aspirin® may be taken together with a second antiplatelet drug depending on the patient and the condition
- If you are being prescribed an anticoagulant drug such as warfarin to take long term, your need for the Aspirin® should be re-assessed
- If you are over 70 years of age or have had a previous peptic ulcer, an ulcer prevention medicine should also be taken



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