



High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia

Media Release

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DOES AN ASPIRIN A DAY KEEP CANCER AT BAY?

New insights from Professor Peter Rothwell's group at the University of Oxford indicate that daily aspirin might be effective in preventing several common cancers, especially of the gastrointestinal tract. He will present his findings at the High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia Annual Scientific Meeting in Perth this week.

Cancer is the second most common cause of premature death worldwide, with more than 100,000 new cases diagnosed each year in Australia and and 5 million new cases are diagnosed in Europe and the USA.

Professor Rothwell's group has analysed results from a series of major trials of aspirin use in more than 25,000 patients to show that aspirin was associated with a reduced risk of death from all cancers, including bowel cancer. Benefits were apparent after 5 years and increased with the length of treatment. While the greatest benefit was shown in reduction of colon cancer, the risks of solid cancers of the pancreas and brain and some types of oesophageal and lung cancer were also reduced.

The trials also suggest that aspirin might improve the outcome in patients who develop cancer whilst on treatment.

Ongoing research is now looking at the effect of aspirin on patients who already have cancer and the occurrence of secondaries. Further work also needs to be done to see whether benefits can be seen after shorter treatment periods.

The 2011 Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) of the High Blood Pressure Research Council of Australia will be held from Wednesday 7th to Friday 9th December. Highlights of the meeting include presentations from internationally renowned researchers. For further information please go to <http://www.hbprca.com.au/asm-2011/>.

Ends.

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