



## Here are some questions to ask your doctor:

- What are my chances of having a stroke?
- Would I benefit from taking aspirin?
- Would I be harmed by taking aspirin?
- Will aspirin interfere with my other medications?
- How long should I take aspirin?
- Other questions I have for my doctor (write them down here):

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## How does aspirin help women prevent stroke?

Plaque is a sticky substance that sometimes builds up and blocks arteries in the neck. These arteries are supposed to take blood to the brain, but when an artery is blocked, a stroke can occur. Aspirin helps blood flow smoothly to the brain.

***If you are a woman aged 55–79, talk with your provider about whether to take aspirin to reduce the chances of a stroke.***

## What increases the chances of having a stroke?

The older you are, the greater the chances of a stroke.

Other risk factors include:

- Heart disease
- An enlarged heart
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- Atrial fibrillation (a type of irregular heart beat)

The more of these risk factors you have, the greater your chances of having a stroke.

## How much can aspirin reduce the chance of having a stroke?

That depends on your age, your health, and your lifestyle. If you smoke, the best way to prevent a stroke is to quit smoking. (For assistance, call the Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line at 877-270-7867 or 800-784-8669.)

Whether you smoke or not, taking aspirin gives you some protection against a stroke. In general, aspirin reduces the chances of a first stroke by about 17% in women.

## Is there any harm in taking aspirin?

Taking aspirin can cause bleeding in the stomach. This can sometimes be serious. The risk increases with age. This risk also increases if aspirin is used together with another anti-inflammatory medicine like ibuprofen or naprosyn (Advil, Motrin, Naproxen, Aleve, etc.).

While aspirin can prevent one type of stroke, it does increase the chances of a rare, different kind of stroke.

## Should you take aspirin?

It's always a good idea to talk with your doctor before taking aspirin to prevent a stroke. If you have already had a stroke, you should take aspirin unless your doctor says not to. If your chances of a stroke are high, the benefits of taking aspirin probably outweigh the harms.

Older people are more likely to have a stroke. But, they are also more likely to have serious stomach bleeding if they take aspirin.

## How much aspirin should you take?

If you and your doctor decide that aspirin is right for you, then you should take either: *1 low-dose Aspirin (81 mg) every day OR 1 regular Aspirin (325 mg) every other day.*

Taking more aspirin is not better for you and can cause serious stomach bleeding. If you have side effects, tell your provider.

## Talk with your doctor about how taking Aspirin can help prevent strokes.

For more information on how taking aspirin can help prevent strokes, contact Physicians Plus at (608) 282-8900 or (800) 545-5015.