

The Truth  *About Health*

ASPIRIN INCREASES RISK OF PANCREATIC CANCER

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Results of a preliminary study linked regular aspirin use to an increased risk of pancreatic cancer — a disease that is almost always fatal within five years.

Harvard Researcher, Eva Schernhammer, M.D., and colleagues analyzed data from more than 88,000 nurses followed for 18 years in the Nurse's Health Study.

Researchers found that only 161 of the women developed pancreatic cancer, but those who had reported regular aspirin use for more than 20 years were more likely to develop the cancer than women who hadn't taken aspirin.

- 86% increased risk 14 or more tablets per week
- 41% increased risk 6 to 13 tablets per week
- 29% increased risk 4 to 6 tablets per week
- 11% increased risk 1 to 3 tablets per week

Researchers noted that aspirin and other anti-inflammatory pain relievers are linked to inflammation of the pancreas which increases a person's risk to pancreatic cancer. In addition to restricting the use of aspirin, people can lower the risk of pancreatic cancer by not smoking and maintaining proper dietary habits.

SOURCE: Frontiers in Cancer Prevention Research meeting, American Association for Cancer Research, Phoenix, October 26-30, 2003; American Association for Cancer Research, news conference; Eva Schernhammer, M.D., Harvard Medical School, Boston; WebMD Health, www.my.webmd.com, October 27, 2003.