

World-first aspirin study reaches new milestone

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Australia's largest clinical trial is a step closer to revealing in 2018 whether healthy older people should or should not take aspirin to prevent or delay cardiovascular disease (heart attack and stroke), dementia, depression and some types of cancers.

[ASPREE \(ASpirin in Reducing Events in the Elderly\)](#), a randomised, placebo controlled trial in older people, has reached its recruitment target of 19,000 participants in Australia and the US.

Led by Monash University and the Berman Center for Outcomes and Clinical Research in the US, the ASPREE trial will measure extended years of living free from physical and cognitive disability, to determine the benefits versus the risks of daily low-dose aspirin.

Principal Investigator to the trial in Australia, Professor John McNeil, credits the 16,500 Australian volunteers - aged between 70 and 97 years - as the true heroes of medical research.

"Without the community mindedness of each and every participant in the study, we could not have reached this remarkable milestone. We are extremely grateful for their commitment to help improve the health and medical care for future generations," said Professor McNeil.

"If aspirin is shown to be overall beneficial, thousands of healthy [older people](#) around the world will be advised to take the drug; if aspirin is proven not to be beneficial, thousands will be saved from taking an unnecessary medication."

Additional results in 2018 will be from ancillary studies that investigate the effect of aspirin on: [age-related macular degeneration](#), cancer, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, severe infection, sleep apnoea, age-related hearing loss and microvascular changes in the brain.

Of note is Australia's first Healthy Ageing Biobank, a repository of blood samples from more than 11,500 ASPREE participants to help researchers identify blood-borne predictors of disease, such as Alzheimer's, or even good health.

In Australia, ASPREE is primarily conducted through general practice in south-eastern states and territory. Participants are randomly allocated to take daily 100mg aspirin or a matching placebo tablet, undergoing annual health checks until late 2017.

Provided by Monash University

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