

# Aspirin may reduce cardiovascular risk during bereavement

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An investigation that has appeared in the current issue of *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* suggests that low-dose aspirin may have a role in the prevention of cardiovascular risk associated with bereavement. In the 24 h following the death of a significant person, the incidence of acute myocardial infarction increases 21.1-fold. Low-dose aspirin could be a suitable prevention strategy in acute bereavement.

To investigate aspirin as a feasible preventive intervention, acutely bereaved participants (n = 10) were recruited on average within 30 days (SD = 14.67) of the death of their spouse along with nonbereaved controls (n = 12). Hemodynamic markers (blood pressure, heart rate, HRV) and depressive symptoms (Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale; CES-D) were assessed during 2 laboratory visits. Results show an attenuated physiological reactivity to a grief-related stress task and a beneficial effect on depressive symptoms in the aspirin group. Higher cardiovascular reactivity to emotional stressors in bereavement could amplify increased [cardiovascular risk](#). The effect of aspirin on depressive symptoms is consistent with previous studies linking [depressive symptoms](#) with inflammation.

In conclusion, aspirin may have a potential preventive benefit targeting increased cardiovascular risk in bereavement. Further research is needed to investigate this potential link.

**More information:** Sebastian Karl et al. Low-Dose Aspirin for Prevention of Cardiovascular Risk in Bereavement: Results from a

Feasibility Study, *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* (2018). [DOI: 10.1159/000481862](https://doi.org/10.1159/000481862)

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