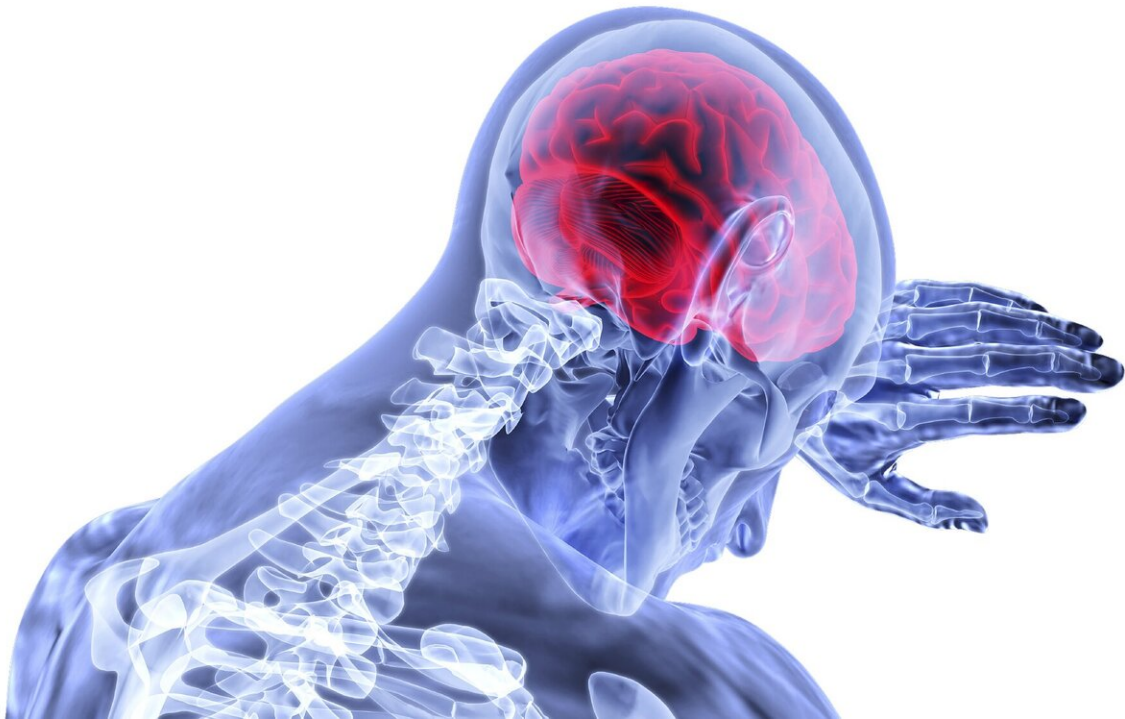


# Aspirin can reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes in pneumonia patients

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New research presented at this year's European Congress of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases (ECCMID) taking place online (9-12 July) shows that aspirin can reduce the risk of serious cardiovascular events such as ischemic stroke and myocardial infarction (MI—heart attack) in patients with pneumonia.

Serious cardiovascular complications are common in cases of pneumonia and are strongly associated with long-term mortality. This study by Dr. Fergus Hamilton and colleagues at the University of Bristol, UK, looked at whether aspirin could reduce the risk of ischemic stroke (stroke caused by blockage of blood vessels, representing some 80% of strokes) and [heart attack](#), and if the drug could have a preventative role to play in primary care settings.

The team analyzed the details of all patients aged over 50 with pneumonia from the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD), a large UK primary care database of more than 61 million patients. The primary outcome was defined as the occurrence of both ischemic stroke and MI, while either of those events happening individually was defined as the secondary outcome.

Of the 48,743 [patients](#) identified as being eligible for inclusion in the study, the researchers found 8099 aspirin users who were matched to 8099 non-users also selected from the sample group.

The authors found that the risk of the primary outcome (stroke and MI) was 36% lower in aspirin users compared to non-users. The drug was also associated with a reduced risk of both secondary outcomes with [ischemic stroke](#) and MI rates being 30% and 54% lower, respectively, in aspirin users.

The researchers conclude that "this study provides supporting evidence that aspirin use is associated with reduced ischaemic events after pneumonia in a primary care setting. This drug may have a future clinical role in preventing this important complication."

Dr. Fergus Hamilton, Wellcome Doctoral Fellow at the University of Bristol says that "this research really paves the foundation for a clinical trial of aspirin in pneumonia, which remains the most common reason

for admission to hospital in many countries."

**More information:** Fergus Hamilton et al, Aspirin reduces cardiovascular events in patients with pneumonia: a prior event rate ratio analysis in a large primary care database, *European Respiratory Journal* (2020). [DOI: 10.1183/13993003.02795-2020](https://doi.org/10.1183/13993003.02795-2020)

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