

# NSAID use associated with lower colorectal cancer mortality rates among postmenopausal women

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Postmenopausal women who reported having used nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for at least 10 years at the time of enrollment in the Women's Health Initiative study had a lower risk for death from colorectal cancer compared with women who reported no use of these drugs at enrollment, according to data presented at the 10th AACR International Conference on Frontiers in Cancer Prevention Research, held Oct. 22-25, 2011.

"Our results suggest that nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) use is associated with lower colorectal [cancer](#) mortality among postmenopausal women who use these medications more consistently and for longer periods of time," said Anna E. Coghill, M.P.H., a doctoral student in epidemiology at the University of Washington and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

She and her colleagues evaluated the association between aspirin and nonaspirin NSAID use and colorectal cancer mortality in 160,143 postmenopausal women enrolled in the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) who did not report a history of colorectal cancer at baseline. The study population included women enrolled in the WHI clinical trials and women enrolled in the WHI observational study.

"The WHI study population represents a large and well-characterized cohort of [postmenopausal women](#), and the medication data collected in this cohort made it possible for us to investigate multiple types, durations and strengths of NSAID use," Coghill said.

Researchers confirmed 2,119 cases of colorectal cancer through medical reports and verified 492 deaths due to colorectal cancer through a

centralized [medical record](#) and death certificate review.

Coghill and colleagues found that reported use of [NSAIDs](#) such as aspirin, ibuprofen and prescription NSAIDs at baseline, by itself, was not associated with colorectal cancer mortality.

However, women in the study who reported using NSAIDs at both study enrollment and three years after study enrollment had an approximately 30 percent lower rate of death due to colorectal cancer compared with women who reported no NSAID use or use at only one of these two time points. Researchers also observed significant reductions in colorectal cancer mortality among women who reported at least 10 years of NSAID use at study enrollment compared with those who reported no use.

"The results of our study help to further clarify the importance of different durations of NSAID use over time for the risk for dying from colorectal cancer," Coghill said.

Provided by American Association for Cancer Research

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