

Combo therapy cuts heart attack, stroke risk by half: Study

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Combination therapy of aspirin, statins and at least two blood pressure medications given in fixed doses can slash the risk of fatal cardiovascular disease (CVD) by more than half, says an international study led by researchers in Canada and India.

The fixed-dose combination (FDC) therapies were examined both with and without aspirin versus control groups in a combined analysis of more than 18,000 patients without prior CVD from three large clinical trials. FDCs including aspirin cut the risk of heart attacks by 53 per cent, stroke by 51 per cent, and deaths from cardiovascular causes by 49 per cent.

About 80 per cent of cardiovascular events occur in individuals without a prior history of such illness, meaning effective preventative strategies including medications in people without CVD is essential, if the majority of heart attacks, strokes and related deaths in the world are to be prevented, the authors of the study state.

The study involved investigators from 13 countries and included participants from 26 countries and every inhabited continent of the world. The study was published by *The Lancet* and concurrently presented at the European Society of Cardiology Congress by Joseph.

“Heart diseases are the leading cause of death in India and have a huge economic impact both to individuals, families and the nation. Therefore, its prevention is paramount to protect the population and enhance the economic growth of India. The study demonstrates the power of a simple innovation of low-cost fixed-dose combination in preventing heart diseases substantially,” said Dr Prabhakaran D, VP, Public Health Foundation of India.