BioSpect
the business of Bi
24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

Aspirin can reduce cancer risk: Study

16 August 2014 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

Aspirin can reduce cancer risk: Study



An aspirin a day could dramatically cut people's chances of getting and dying from common cancers, according to recent research. A research team led by Professor Jack Cuzick, head of the center for cancer prevention at Queen Mary University of London, concluded that people between 50 and 65 years should consider taking 75mg low-dosage tablets of aspririn regularly.

Prof. Cuzick said that taking aspirin "looks to be the most important thing we can do to reduce cancer after stopping smoking and reducing obesity, and will probably be much easier to implement."

Aspirin was originally developed as a painkiller and a treatment for fever and inflammation, but more than a century after it was first synthesized from a Willow bark tree, researchers have found many medical uses for it.
It has demonstrated its effectiveness in reducing the risk of heart attacks and strokes as well as the chances of occurence of some cancers. But the big question has been whether the benefits outweigh the harm, because aspirin can cause stomach bleeds, which could be potentially fatal in some people.

The study published in the journal Annals of Oncology, revealed that by taking low-dose aspirin every day for ten years, bowel cancer cases were cut by about 35 percent and deaths by 40 percent. Aspirin could reduce rates of oesophageal and stomach cancers by 30 percent and death from them by 35 percent to 50 percent.

He said people considering embarking on a regime of daily aspirin should talk to their GP and get tested for potential risks first.

Â

All the cancers in which aspirin has a beneficial effect have some lifestyle causes - from smoking in lung cancer to alcohol in oesophageal cancer and obesity in all of them. Taking aspirin, said Mr Cuzick, "should not be seen as a reason for not improving your lifestyle". The drug, however, could reduce cancer risk even in people who have a healthy lifestyle, he said.

However, Cancer Research UK (CRUK) warned that people should speak to their GP before starting a daily dosage. The charity said it would like to see more research on who should and should not be taking it. "Aspirin is showing promise in preventing certain types of cancer, but it's vital that we balance this with the complications it can cause - such as bleeding, stomach ulcers, or even strokes in some people," said Dr Julie Sharp, head of health information at CRUK.

"Before aspirin can be recommended for cancer prevention, some important questions need to be answered, including what is the best dose and how long people should take it for. And tests need to be developed to predict who is likely to have side-

effects. Given the continued uncertainty over who should take aspirin, Cancer Research UK is funding a number of trials and research projects to get a clearer picture," she said.

Â

Â