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Aspirin Alert Update for Dentistry As Cardioprotective and As an Emergency Drug

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Special Alert #1:

Sudden discontinuation of aspirin may elevate the risk of myocardial infarction.

Special Alert #2:

Ibuprofen may interfere with aspirin's cardioprotection.

Special Alert #3:

Strong advisory warning against the discontinuation of dual aspirin/clopidogrel (Plavix®) antiplatelet therapy in patients with coronary artery stents.

Note: In any medical emergency, call for help (911)
if the emergency exceeds your comfort level.





Aspirin in the Dental Office

Aspirin is one of the emergency drugs as part of the protocol in patients experiencing chest pains. (26) The following are some suggestions.

1. The dose for an emergency is either two to four 81 mg "baby aspirin" tablets or one single standard aspirin tablet; they should be non-enteric coated or "plain" aspirin tablets. Call 911 at the sign of chest pain and administer the aspirin tablets. (26)
2. For the most rapid uptake into the blood stream, the aspirin tablets should be chewed then swallowed with some water if available. If no water is available, have the patient chew and swallow the tablets. (27)
3. If there is only enteric-coated aspirin tablets available, the individual can take those (better than nothing) but they also must chew the tablet(s) before swallowing. (25)
4. Watch the expiration date of the aspirin product. That date will be stamped on the package and label. Aspirin does break down to inactive by-products over time, even if the bottle is sealed. Many aspirin products have about a one year expiration or one year "lifetime". Replace when necessary.
5. Keep either regular aspirin tablets (325 mg each) or "baby" aspirin of 81 mg each in your emergency drug kit.
6. Do not give to individuals with a history of aspirin allergy manifested as asthma with nasal polyps. (25)

References: (25) No authors listed. ACC/AHA 2007 guidelines for the management of patients with unstable angina/non-st-elevation myocardial infarction. *J Am Coll Cardiol* 2007; 50(7):e1-157. (26) *Dental Office Medical Emergencies* 2nd edition, p. 43 Authors Meiller TE, Wynn RL, McMullin AM, Biron C, Crossley HL. LexiComp Publishing Hudson, OH. (27) Feldman M, Cryer B. Aspirin absorption rates and platelet inhibition times with 325-mg buffered aspirin tablets (chewed or swallowed intact) and with buffered aspirin solution. *Am J Cardiol* 1999; 84:404-409.