

Top cardiologists say Aspirin is

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platelets it has a lengthy therapeutic effect. A dose of 81mg is enough to have its thromboxane as inhalatory effect. Medical Personnel should become more and more familiar with this use of aspirin and make frequent use of it being cheap and effective both in primary and secondary prevention of fatal and non-fatal cardiac events.

It is a source of great satisfaction that ATCO Laboratories are taking a lead providing all strengths of coated aspirin and are playing a leading role in public awareness programmes about aspirin. The Pakistan Aspirin Day being organised on 4th August is a part of this important programme and it is indeed heartening to know that it is being arranged by ATCO Laboratories, they need to be commended for it.

Maj General Ashur Khan: Aspirin has been in use for the benefit of human ailments for centuries. However its use & its much greater potential as a wonderful drug in the primary and Secondary Prevention of Ischaemic heart disease has been recognised during the last few decades.

The extensive, long-term randomised trials carried out in several thousand patients have also proven its beneficial effects in reducing mortality in conditions other than primary and secondary prevention of (IHI) like after Angioplasty, CABG Surgery, Prosthetic valves Cerebral strokes and Diabetes mellitus mainly through its anti-platelet effects.

Although a Very cheap drug so far as cost is concerned, its efficacy is comparable to the much costlier drugs like Streptokinase, Betablockers, ACE inhibitors and some other latest antiplatelet drugs like Ticlopidine and Clopidogrel, in patients with angina and Myocardial Infarction.

The drug is effective over a wide range of dosage from 75mg to 1300mg per day. Recommended dose in Acute heart attack is 150-300mg per day and it should be started as early as possible, even at home, preferably chewed but can be swallowed. For long-term used 75-150 mg per day is an appropriate dose because G.I. side-effects are relatively low with smaller doses.

The adverse effects are rare and the contra-indication are few which include Active Peptic ulcer or history of Gastrointestinal bleed, aspirin

allergy (rare) or a known blood disorder. History of minor dyspeptic symptoms does not contra-indicate the use of Aspirin in acute conditions.

Unfortunately the awareness about the usefulness of this very effective and cheap drug is lacking not only in the general public but even in the medical profession. Aspirin is as useful if not more as Nitroglycerin (Angised) in an acute Episode of Myocardial Ischaemia like Unstable Angina or Acute Myocardial Infarction and even on the slightest doubt of heart attack or Angina it should be started before further advice is available from a doctor.

Most of the patients with Ischaemic heart disease Diabetes Mellitus or Cerebral Strokes have to continue Aspirin throughout their life unless the Physician advises otherwise.

Pakistan Aspirin Foundation established a few years ago has been holding Regular Seminars, Symposia and Public awareness programmes in different parts of the four provinces to create awareness about the use of this very compliance-friendly drug. The impact has been immense but a lot needs to be done.

ATCO Laboratories has always been in the forefront in the propagation of awareness about the Ischaemic heart Disease and in particular about the Use of Aspirin in Cardiovascular Medicine.

DR Maqbool H. Jaffery: Aspirin, the small wonder drug, continues to amaze all concerned for the last one century. From its humble beginning as the original analgesic and antipyretic it has come a long way in the expansion of its indications. The discovery of its antiplatelet activity has led to its establishment as a life-saver in cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases, while new indications continue to emerge, waiting for more data to accumulate.

Presently the established indications include acute myocardial infarction, unstable angina and stroke. Aspirin is used for primary as well as secondary prevention of these serious problems. The role of aspirin is also established in the prevention of the complications of Diabetes and Hypertension. The emerging indications include prevention of various types of cancer, certain complications of pregnancy, Dementia, venous thrombosis etc.

Aspirin is an orphan drug in the sense that it is very cheap

and there are very few takers for the propagation and creation of the awareness of its usefulness in medical profession and public at large.

There are still a relatively small number of people who know that a small pill like aspirin if swallowed or chewed immediately at the onset of heart attack can prevent death by almost fifty per cent.

This is where ATCO Laboratories need to be congratulated. They have taken up the onerous task of creating the awareness amongst all concerned. They have also been instrumental in collaborating with Pakistan Aspirin Foundation whose main function is to create the awareness and carry out research in aspirin-related issues.

Dr. Ehsan-ul-Haq: In the modern time many uses of ASPIRIN have been discovered & are being discovered in addition to its traditional use as anti-inflammatory analgesic & antipyretic. Its use in low dose in prevention of Ischemic heart disease symptoms & in preventing thromboembolic disease of cerebral vessels & prevention of spread of emboli is well recognized & practised & had the most outstanding effects on mortality from these disorders. New uses in prevention of cancer & neoplastic diseases of various types are being explored.

It is also finding a place in old disease like Diabetes, where it is recommended to be taken regularly as a prophylactic for coronary artery disease or in the treatment of membranous proliferative glomerulonephritis (Kidney Disorder) along with another antiplatelet agent for improving results of therapy.

In short ASPIRIN is a versatile drug which has multiple effects in the body & waiting to be employed in many more ailments of human body.

ATCO LABORATORIES has played a model role regarding the awareness of ASPIRIN use, & benefits of ASPIRIN therapy.

Dr. Muhammad Javed Iqbal: More than a million Americans suffer a heart attack & 46,000 of them die. Each year about 600,000 Americans suffer about 158,000 of them die.

ASPIRIN has been available for over a century & treatment of vascular events that include Stroke, Myocardial infarction & sudden death.

ASPIRIN helps prevent heart attacks by stopping blocked platelets from sticking together

then reduces the chance that Clots will & block arteries.

ASPIRIN ability to prevent vascular events, including non-fatal MI, Non-fatal stroke & vascular death in a wide range of high risk groups is well established in Secondary prevention. In high-risk patients ASPIRIN therapy reduces non-fatal stroke by one third & vascular death by nearly one Quarter.

High risk patients enjoy the greatest overall benefit with a relative reduction in major vascular events rates approaching 25% to 30%. The role of ATCO LABORATORIES in the promotion & awareness of ASPIRIN use, benefits of ASPIRIN therapy in vascular events is highly commendable.

Prof Abdul Hafeez Chaudhry: Acetylsalicylic acid was introduced under the trade of Aspirin in 1899. Its excellent analgesic and anti-pyretic properties coupled with fact that it is reasonably well tolerated, its easy manufacture and low cost ensured that it quickly became the standard drug worldwide for the treatment of pain, fever and inflammation.

Almost half the century passed before the first report that aspirin affected coagulation was published. In 1954 the report of late haemorrhage after tonsillectomy were reported in patients taking Aspirin. In the following years the relevant literature repeatedly suggested that aspirin may induce alteration in haemostatic process. Aspirin enteric coated inhibits platelet aggregation.

The drug is indicated when inhibition of platelet aggregation is required in for prophylaxis of vascular disease. This applies to all conditions characterized by increased thrombosis tendency e.g. cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disorders and following vascular surgical procedure.

Prof. S. H. Shafqat: Aspirin which started its royal beginning as a remedy for the arthritis of a queen, went in oblivion with the development of NSAIDs.

Its new role as a saviour of millions of lives is a modern discovery. An humble medication is of a tremendous benefit for the humanity as it is by far the most effective agent for preventing coronary occlusion.

It is commendable that one of the most prestigious Pakistani pharmaceutical house-ATCO is organising 'Aspirin Day'. The programme will go a long way in bringing out the latest information on pharmacodynamics and therapeutic benefits of Aspirin.

Prof. Ejaz Ahmed Vohra:

a wonder drug

Aspirin completed a century of its use in 1997. It was in fact a re-discovery as the drug has been used for fevers as long as 2500-BC like many other discoveries in medicine and science. The aspirin was also a serendipitous discovery. A cheap drug has been used from humble beginning of anti-pyretic to anti-inflammatory and main use now as antiplatelet drug. At the end of century of use of aspirin it was said, "New century has just begun." Its use is now established in preventing colo-rectal cancer. Many other uses will eventually unfold. This drug is a blessing for mankind not only for its efficacy in wide variety of disorders but also being a very cheap agent, a rarity in modern pharmaceutical industry.

I have to congratulate M/S ATCO Pvt. Limited for its educational activities in promoting use of aspirin. I also pray the management will undertake to provide other orphan drugs like thiazides, which recently have achieved as equal if not superior to expensive established anti-hypertensive agents.

Dr. Khawar Abbas Kazmi: Cardiovascular diseases are currently the No. 1 killer in the world. In Pakistan, we are also witnessing an epidemic rise in its incidence. It is no longer a disease of the "rich" as rapid urbanization and changing lifestyles have spread this largely preventable problem to all strata the society.

The answer certainly lies only in prevention and we all need to collectively work to evolve and implement strategies to educate masses and develop facilities for cost-effective management. Aspirin so far has been the most effective agent in our fight against this deadly disease and can be termed as the "drug of the century". Its regular use under the guidance of a health care provider can help in both prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disorders.

Prof. Mansoor Ahmed: Aspirin for over a hundred years has been a useful anti-inflammatory drug. The 21st century is witnessing new and emerging indications for this unique compound. It is now mandatory to use it for ischaemic heart disease, in diabetics and in those with two or more risk factors for coronary artery disease. 75-mg aspirin a day is an adequate dose producing minimal or no side-effects. It has also been found to be useful in pre-eclampsia in pregnant woman and in prevention of various

uses, aspirin has found ever-expanding role in medical care for our patients.

In 70's aspirin was added to the prescription of all coronary artery bypass surgery patients as it showed increased patency rates for saphenous vein grafts to the coronary arteries. Soon afterwards its use in prevention of stroke was established. It is the main drug in the secondary prevention of ischaemic heart disease and also in its primary prevention.

Prof. Dr. M. Akbar Chaudhary: Aspirin can rightly be called as wonder drug of 20th century. It was initially used as pain killer, treatment of various fevers, joint pains and rheumatoid fever.

Almost three decades back its new uses were discovered due to its anti-platelet properties. It was noticed that even very small dose of 75-100 mg Aspirin reduces stickiness / adhesiveness of platelets. Platelets are one of the small cells in our blood, which are responsible for initial clot formation to plug the holes in blood vessels in case of injury to prevent bleeding.

'Aspirin by reducing the stickiness of platelets prevents clots formation in blood vessels of heart, brain and other areas of body and thus prevents heart attacks and strokes. Aspirin has now emerged as an important life saving drug and its efficacy is well established.

Dr. Farooq Nazir: Salicylates have been in use for more than a century. Initially they were used as analgesics, antipyretics and anti-inflammatory agents. In the sixties they were identified as antiplatelet agents acting by inhibiting cyclo-oxygenase pathway. The efficacy of aspirin is well established now as an antiplatelet agent. Various clinical trials have revealed that it's a valuable drug. In Acute MI, if given within first 24 hours, the mortality rate is reduced by 25%. In acute coronary syndromes like unstable angina the risk of AMI & deaths is reduced by 50%.

The use of Aspirin for secondary prevention of AMI is associated with approximately 30% reduction in overall MI, 27% non-fatal strokes and 15% total cardiovascular disease mortality.

In this regard, ATCO has provided big contribution regarding patient awareness, free sampling for patients welfare, symposia under supervision of Pakistan Aspirin foundation regarding medical uses of

Aspirin still the gold standard

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Antarctic, Hillary to Everest and the astronaut to the moon. "Aspirin now has a whole host of possibilities that were never envisioned, it really has an extraordinary potential to have benefits on a wide range of diseases" (Charles Hennekens) it is used for:

- i. Prevention of eclampsia and retarded fetal growth
- ii. Prevention of cataract
- iii. Prevention of colo-rectal cancer
- iv. Reduction of cognitive decline, senility and dementia.

"DOES NOT AFFECT THE HEART" That assurance in the Bayer aspirin ads of the 1920s spoke to concerns of the day that some drugs could damage the life-sustaining organ. Today it's clear that aspirin can affect the heart. Ironically, it turns out the effects are beneficial, so much so that some aspirin ads now carry the American Heart Association's seal to highlight

the cardiovascular effects.

In fact, of the 80 million aspirin tablets Americans take each day, most are taken not for everyday aches and pains but to reduce the risk of heart disease, according to aspirin manufacturer Bayer Corp.

Based on studies showing aspirin's usefulness in treating cardiovascular disease, including heart attack and stroke, the Food and Drug Administration has approved its use to treat some of these serious conditions. Most recently, in 1998, FDA finalized a rule to give doctors updated information about the use of aspirin for men and women who have had a heart attack or stroke or are at high risk for them.

"Used the way it should be, the information should save a lot of lives," says Debra Bowen, M.D., deputy director of one of FDA's drug review offices. "In addition," she says, "the information should reduce adverse reactions and allow doctors to better target those who need to use the product."

Health awareness

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Pakistan and concerned directly with supplying the health products to the disease market, mobilize a part of their resources in the service of the masses.

In this context, it is heartening to see that during the past few years some of the Pharmaceutical companies have been organizing public awareness programmes. Among the few, is an ongoing programme, recently organised by M/s ATCO laboratories, as "Aspirin Day". This is being celebrated in all the major cities of Pakistan, in order to increase the awareness about "the use of Aspirin in the prevention of heart diseases".

with the data of different clinical trials.

Dr. Shahid Abbas: Aspirin is the only over-the-counter medication that has been proven to help prevent cardiovascular disease in persons who have suffered a first heart attack or a transient ischemic attack or who have unstable angina.

Aspirin helps reduce the risk of heart attack by diminishing the clotting action of blood platelets.

The activities of Aspirin Day varied from setting up of stalls at all the major hospitals of the cities, to display of banners and posters at the public places and hospitals plus the free supply of samples to the patients. ATCO has long been associated with service oriented programmes and over a couple of years not only through such events but also through public service messages in print and electronic media.

ATCO, a progressive national company, the manufacturers of aspirin (which is friendly to the stomach due to its protective enteric coating) is determined to serve the nation in improving the quality of life for the people of Pakistan.

suggested that FDA approve the use of a standard low level dose of aspirin for the prevention of heart attacks and forms of stroke caused by blockages in blood vessels.

ATCO Laboratories (Pakistan) Ltd is doing a tremendous job in creating awareness in the use of aspirin by holding aspirin day throughout Pakistan. I congratulate ATCO Laboratories on holding another successful Aspirin