

Aspirin Therapy for Adults with Diabetes

What does aspirin do — and why do I need it?

Aspirin is a **platelet inhibitor**. It partially blocks the action of the platelets, the parts of the blood that make blood cells clot (clump together). This lowers the chance that a blood clot will form — and so it also lowers the chance of a heart attack or stroke.

Keep in mind that aspirin does NOT lower your blood glucose. (You may take other medications that do this.) Yet because people with diabetes have a high risk for heart disease, aspirin can be an important part of your treatment. So, too, can medications for your blood pressure and cholesterol.

Guidelines for taking aspirin

You should always follow your doctor's specific instructions for taking any medication, including aspirin. But there are some general rules that will probably apply to you:

- **Before you start taking aspirin, make sure your doctor knows about:**
 - **Any allergies** you have, especially an allergy to aspirin or an arthritis medication
 - **Any health conditions besides diabetes**, such as a bleeding ulcer
 - **Anything else you take for your health**, like vitamins, herbal supplements, or other medications — especially any that affect blood clotting, such as Coumadin, Ticlid, Plavix, or Eliquis
- **Your doctor will tell you how much aspirin to take (your dose).** You may choose a standard aspirin tablet (coated or buffered version) or a baby aspirin.



- **To help prevent upset stomach**, take aspirin with food or after a meal. Drink a full glass of water when you take it.
- **If you plan to have surgery, let your doctor know that you're taking aspirin.** You may need to stop taking it a week or more beforehand.

What are the side effects?

Aspirin can damage the lining of the stomach. This can cause painful ulcers. And if you also take an anti-inflammatory like ibuprofen, your risk for ulcers is even greater.

If you have ongoing stomach pain or a ringing in your ears, talk to your doctor. Your doctor can help determine if aspirin is the cause, and what you can do to treat it.

My aspirin dose: _____