



ASPIRIN IN REDUCING EVENTS IN THE ELDERLY

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Farewell to Dr. Richard Grimm, Jr. MD, PhD

Congratulations to Dr. Richard Grimm, who retired in May 2016 after serving as The Berman Center Medical Director for over 20 years, overseeing more than 100 studies in heart and kidney disease, diabetes, women’s health, cancer and neurological disorders. We wish him all the best in his retirement and asked him to reflect upon his accomplished research career

in the interview below.

Who encouraged you to become a physician-scientist?

Growing up in a small Oklahoma town the classroom sizes were small, but I was the one asking too many questions of the social sciences teacher. She was frustrated when I was asking questions but was even more frustrated if I kept quiet. Later in high school, I excelled at the sciences because of dedicated teachers. When I first went to college, I wanted to play football, but my inquiring mind and external circumstances caused me to pursue professional school. I thought about dentistry or becoming a veterinarian, and initially avoided medical school. I thought medical school was only for geeky students and memorizing facts. Later, I attended the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine where my innate curiosity persisted, and I even had a following of fellow medical students.



Though it was not all smooth sailing, despite the wishes of the dean of the medical school, my final months of medical school were spent on the island of Madagascar. I was later evacuated due to conflict within the country, and I graduated medical school on the coast of the Red Sea. I spent a year in an internship at Metropolitan Hospital in New York City where I began researching in the library and trying to find answers by tracing back scientific articles to the very beginning stages. After three months with no answers, I had the epiphany that there was little to no evidence to back up the current medical practices. I was accepted as a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar at Duke University where I had a great mentor. My first publication was as the first author in the *New England Journal of Medicine* (below). I completed residency and later a research fellowship at the University of Minnesota Division of Epidemiology. From here, I continued to establish myself as a physician-scientist at the University of Minnesota, later obtaining a Master of Public Health and a Ph.D. in Cardiovascular Epidemiology. I didn’t know when to quit school! I eventually made my way to the Berman Center for Clinical Research at Minneapolis Medical Research Foundation.

1. Grimm RH, K Shimoni, WR Harlan, EH Estes. Evaluation of patient care protocol by various providers. N Engl J Med 1975;292:507.

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What did you find most rewarding as a physician-scientist?

I enjoy finding out that a commonly used medication is not the best treatment for people. Knowing that the answers from my study can help many people in the future in giving them the best care is incredibly satisfying. I also enjoy rubbing elbows with excellent researchers from around the world. Getting publications and being respected give me great fulfillment.

What do you plan on doing now that you are retired?

I have no big plans. I am interested in opening my home and hosting *Airbnb* travelers. I have always enjoyed talking with other people from around the world. I will be spending time with my Newfoundland, Genghis Khan. I plan on getting back into contact with people I have worked with previously on studies. I will continue to follow what is going on in medical research and read medical journals.

What you like to tell ASPREE participants?

Congratulations on being devoted to a study that is going to answer the critical question: Can aspirin prolong good health?

ACES Update 1,000

We have now reached 1,000 samples! Thank you for your contribution to this valuable research!! As a reminder, ACES, the ASPREE Cancer Endpoints Study, will further investigate the effect of aspirin on the development and spread (metastasis) of different types of cancer. Our goal is 2,500 samples and there is still time to talk with your ASPREE coordinator about enrollment.

Brain Games



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Aspirin Frequently Asked Questions

What dosage of aspirin is used in the trial and why?

'Low-dose' aspirin is used in the ASPREE study. The dosage is 100mg of enteric-coated aspirin. The enteric coating on the aspirin acts to reduce abdominal discomfort. Half of ASPREE participants have been randomly assigned this low-dose aspirin, the other half a matching placebo.

The 100mg dose of aspirin has blood thinning (anti-platelet) actions with low side effects from bleeding. This dose is lower than that usually taken for pain relief and for reducing fever. It is the same dose prescribed for people who need it for secondary prevention, i.e., to prevent a second heart attack or stroke.

Study medication is well tolerated by most people. However, we advise all our participants to discuss any concerns about study medication with their provider or ASPREE study staff.

Are there any risks with taking aspirin?

All medications have the potential to cause adverse effects, and aspirin is no exception. Aspirin has risks related to its actions on prostaglandins and platelets. In addition to causing fever, inflammation and pain, prostaglandins form a layer on the stomach wall to protect it from harsh stomach acid. Aspirin inhibits the action of prostaglandins and hence there is a risk of this layer thinning. If the layer becomes too thin stomach acid can erode the wall of the stomach and form an ulcer.

Others side effects of aspirin are related to its action on platelets. Aspirin's anti-platelet or blood thinning effect leads to a delay in blood clotting. This means that if you bleed and are taking aspirin, the bleeding may take longer to stop. Symptoms of this longer bleeding time may include bruises, blood in the stools (due to gastrointestinal bleeding), or in the worst case, a bleed into the brain (cerebral hemorrhage or a bleeding stroke). These adverse effects are risks. Although some people unfortunately experience side-effects, not everyone that takes aspirin will experiences adverse effects.

ASPREE is the first study in the world to determine the balance of the benefit of aspirin versus the risk of side-effects in healthy older people.

When will I know what tablet I've been on?

We anticipate being able to advise you which arm of the study you have been in by the end of 2017. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to medical research for the duration of this study.

For more information and answers to other questions, please www.aspree.org





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Site Spotlight: Phalen Village

Phalen Village Clinic is a Family Medicine Clinic in St. Paul, the capital of Minnesota. We are just down the highway from Health Partners Riverside, an ASPREE site in Minneapolis. Phalen has been a part of ASPREE since 2010.

We are so happy that it is summer. No shoveling snow or tripping on the ice. All of our “snow birds” are back and it’s nice to see them again.

Here’s just a few of the ways ASPREE participants are spending their time this summer.

- Practicing archery to defend a title at the U.S. Senior Games
- Gardening (and bringing the clinic staff treats from the garden)
- A bicycle enthusiast will be racking up hundreds of miles this summer despite some heart troubles. He is a proud supporter of the World’s Largest Ball of Twine near his home.
- Working out at the YMCA. Our eldest YMCA athlete is 93 years and rarely misses a day.
- An aspiring author is completing the some chapters on a book on Chinese music and drama.

- Another author is writing a book on Seminole Indian life including her own recollections.
- A food shelf volunteer is the “go to” guy for heavy lifting and has been for years.
- Our motorcycle granny rides to Elementary schools and reads to kids.
- Teaching classes on how to make Kransekake, a special Norwegian Cake
- Heading “Up North” to the cabin.
- Others will spend time caring for family members, restoring their own health, moving and “downsizing”, watching the Grandkids and Great Grandkids all while helping us answer the research question, does aspirin prolong a healthy life?

Dr. Peterson, Lea and Ellen wish to express our thanks to all of them. And to all of you. Hope your summer is great!



Lea Seaquist, RN and Study Coordinator; Ellen Dodds, RD and Study Coordinator; Dr. Kevin Peterson (PI), Dr. Kirby Clark, not pictured