



Aspirin



Overview

This is the common name for acetylsalicylic acid. It's a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug. You don't need a prescription for aspirin unless your doctor wants you to take a high dose.

Uses

Why do we take aspirin? Well, it's used to treat many types of pain and inflammation. It's good for things like headaches, toothaches and muscle aches. It reduces fever. And, it's also commonly used to prevent or treat heart attack and stroke.

How it works

How does aspirin work? It blocks the production of hormone-like substances called "prostaglandins." They're made by your body's cells at sites of injury or infection. Prostaglandins play a role in things like pain, inflammation and blood clotting. By blocking prostaglandins, aspirin can relieve unpleasant symptoms.

Conclusion

Aspirin isn't safe for everyone. For example, it's generally not recommended during pregnancy. It's also not good for people with stomach ulcers or problems with the kidneys or liver. So before you take it, check with your doctor. Make sure it won't interfere with any other drugs you take. For other questions, and to learn about possible side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.