

About a **TABLET**

SUMMER 2018

ASPREE 'EXTENSION' TRACKS LONG TERM IMPACT OF ASPIRIN ON HEALTH

ASPREE-XT heralds new chapter in ageing research

Before the ASPREE study officially ended in December 2017, a staggering 95% of participants had indicated that they wanted to be part of a related follow up study.

Thanks to a funding boost from the NIA (National Institute on Aging) we will have study visits in 2018 as part of the ASPREE-XT study (the XT stands for eXTension).

ASPREE-XT is a new observational study investigating whether there are potential long term health benefits (or not) from taking low dose aspirin.

Recent studies suggest that taking aspirin for 4 – 5 years may reduce the incidence and spread of some cancers, such as bowel cancer, however this may not be evident until many years later. **ASPREE-XT will help determine possible long term effects of aspirin on cancer and other diseases associated with ageing.**

It is thought that aspirin's anti-inflammatory properties may help delay the onset or progress of some diseases over a long period. However, this theory has not been proven.

ASPREE-XT is more than an aspirin study; it is a golden opportunity to understand factors that, in the long term, affect quality of life.

Our aim is to identify the impact that medical conditions, lifestyle, the environment and genetics have on an older person's thinking and memory and physical function.

As older Australians, your participation in ASPREE-XT



Above: Adelaide ASPREE participants Ruth and Eric Fiebig will be signing up for ASPREE-XT.

contributes consistent, 'real world' health information to this research. Your experience of ageing (in wellness or illness) will in turn inform the medical care given to future generations to help them maintain quality of life.

ASPREE-XT is only open to ASPREE participants, including participants who may be experiencing thinking and memory problems or physical disability. **It doesn't matter when you stopped taking study tablets or whether you are, or are not, taking aspirin now, we would be delighted to have you join us in the ASPREE-XT research project.**

We will follow your health in a similar way to ASPREE, such as through study visits, phone calls and through

medical records.

ASPREE-XT annual study visits will be shorter, with only one thinking and memory exercise (this will please lots of participants!). We hope to continue to hold these visits at your GP clinic or a community venue. Whatever your circumstance, we will try to see you.

There will be no study tablets to take, no fasting blood test and phone calls will be six monthly. We will ask you to complete some forms at home (the questions are similar to those asked at ASPREE visits).

You will also likely see familiar faces at XT study visits as most of the ASPREE research team have stayed on to work on the ASPREE-XT project.

ASPREE-XT, a new chapter *(cont. from front page)*

As was the case for ASPREE, if a significant measure is detected during an ASPREE-XT visit (such as an irregular pulse) we will notify your GP.

Your medical records will continue to provide important details about health events, such as a new medical diagnosis, or test.

If you do report a cancer diagnosis and have had a biopsy, we will need your permission to collect from the pathology provider a sample of the biopsy for future cancer studies.

We anticipate that ASPREE-XT will run for five years. Our investigators are applying for funding to continue face-to-face ASPREE-XT study visits until 2022.

How to sign up for XT?

If you haven't already done so, please carefully read the ASPREE-XT Participant Information Consent Form (PICF) and sign and return the consent form (last page of PICF).

Because ASPREE-XT is a new study, we are ethically and legally obliged to gain your consent to participate in study activity before we start. Your GP has been notified that you have been invited to join the ASPREE-XT study.

As always, if you have any questions please contact our friendly team on **1800 728 745** (toll free from a landline).

ASPREE-XT Funding Organisations

- National Institute on Aging (NIA/NIH in the U.S.)
- National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia (NHMRC)
- National Cancer Institute (NCI/NIH)
- Monash University

ASPREE-XT Collaborating Organisations

- Monash University
- Menzies Institute for Medical Research, University of Tasmania
- Australian National University
- The University of Adelaide
- Berman Centre for Outcomes & Clinical Research (Minnesota, U.S.)

ASPREE study countdown



In January this year, our U.S. collaborators and representatives from U.S. funders (NIA and NCI), joined Australian ASPREE investigators to prepare the ASPREE primary paper for publication, to plan future data analyses and to discuss funding opportunities for ASPREE-XT.

Well before ASPREE finished in December 2017, the team was collecting, entering and checking data in preparation for statistical analysis. The 'cleaned' data has been handed to a team of biostatisticians from Monash University to generate the much anticipated results of the ASPREE trial.

Every week brings us closer. This is an exciting time; we've had the pleasure of seeing and talking with you since you joined the trial (for some participants this was seven years ago) and now, the culmination of your commitment and support for medical research into aspirin is fast approaching.

What we call the 'primary' paper is expected to be published in a prestigious, global medical journal in the next few months. The study findings, which will be scrutinised by academic peers, will formally answer ASPREE's main question: does daily low dose aspirin prolong life, free from dementia and persistent physical disability? **ASPREE is the first large scale study in the world to consider the impact of disability on quality of life for older people.** This main paper will also determine the overall benefit versus the risk of low dose aspirin for disease prevention in healthy older people.

Additional research on the effect of aspirin on specific diseases, such as cardiovascular disease and depression, will be published in future papers.

Around the time of publication of the primary paper this year, you and your GP will be notified which study tablet you were taking - aspirin or the placebo - and be given a summary of your ASPREE journey.

ASPREE has collected millions of pieces of health information for analysis (physical measures, thinking and memory data, blood tests, health events and much, much more). Add health information from 16 ASPREE sub-studies and the potential for new discoveries about healthy ageing from just one clinical trial, is unparalleled. It is expected that hundreds of research papers will be generated from the ASPREE study.

ASPREE and the follow up ASPREE-XT study would not have happened without the support from more than 2,000 GPs and 16,703 older Australians. Whether you took aspirin or the placebo tablet for part, or for the duration of the ASPREE trial, your contribution to medical research is invaluable. Thank you.

With your help, we hope to learn more about possible long term effects of aspirin on health in the observational study, ASPREE-XT, which is open to all ASPREE participants in Australia and the U.S. (more about XT over the page).

**FOR ALL ASPREE & ASPREE-XT ENQUIRIES PLEASE CALL
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