

THE TABLET

'Australia's largest primary prevention aspirin study'



Principal Investigator of ASPREE in Australia and head of the School of Public Health & Preventive Medicine - Monash University, Prof John McNeil

An Update from Prof John McNeil

'Locals Step up For Aspirin Test' sums up the incredible response from older Australians to the ASPREE study. These words headed a story in the Sunraysia Daily newspaper on the launch of the trial in Mildura earlier this year. Most importantly, the heading tells *why* the ASPREE study is the largest primary prevention aspirin trial in the world – because over 11,000 healthy older Australians are already 'stepping up' to help. Participants come from hundreds of 'local' communities in and around Australian towns and cities, as you will see on the next page.

ASPREE is fortunate to collaborate with several local universities, health service providers and over 2200 GPs, enabling a significant, international study to come to the people rather than the other way around.

It is with the help of our participants

and collaborators that we will be able to determine if aspirin can prevent or delay the onset of common disabling diseases, such as cardiovascular disease (heart attacks and stroke), dementia and certain cancers, in healthy older people. Whatever the outcome of the study, clinical practice will change in the future as a result of ASPREE.

If the trial is positive, then GPs will recommend their healthy older patients regularly take low dose aspirin.

If the trial does not support a beneficial effect of aspirin, then many people will be saved from taking unnecessary medication.

At the heart of the trial and its sub-studies is to find a way to extend the quality of life for older people around the world—a great reason for 'stepping up'. My personal thanks to everyone who has.

ASPREE MAY SNAPSHOT

Total (Aust) ASPREE participants:

11,058

Target 16,000

- **Females** in ASPREE: 6112
- **Males** in ASPREE: 4940
- **Participants per Location:**
 - Melbourne: 5034
 - Regional Victoria: 3239
 - Tasmania: 1731
 - ACT & Southern NSW: 713
 - Adelaide: 341
- **Sub-study participants:**
 - **SNORE-ASA Study:** 600
 - **ASPREE BioBank:** 7500
 - **ALSOP** questionnaires: ~90%
- **GP Co-Investigators:** 2297
- Age of ASPREE participants:**
Average: 74.8 years **Oldest:** 96 years

ASPREE Cancer Sub-Study Rolls Out

While there is some speculation that aspirin may prevent cancer, at the moment, the effect is unproven. We do know that many are awaiting the outcome of the ASPREE study! The NCI (National Cancer Institute) in the US, recently granted the ASPREE trial \$2.2 million to better investigate the aspirin/cancer relationship. The **ACES (ASPREE Cancer Endpoints Study)** will a) look at genetic predictors of cancer, including additional information regarding family and personal cancer history, and b) seek approval to obtain a small sample of any tumour tissue that is removed during

cancer treatment.

ACES is open to all ASPREE study participants. Volunteers in the Healthy Ageing Biobank sub-study have already provided high quality genetic samples for analysis.

Participants who have not already contributed to the ASPREE Healthy Ageing Biobank, can provide a saliva sample. The information and biological samples collected for ACES will contribute to research about cancer prevention, detection, treatments and potentially cures in older people. ACES is expected to commence later in 2013.

STUDY NEWS

ASPREE Puts Rese

Adelaide

Reaching 300 participants in and around Adelaide is quite an achievement given the centre was launched late last year.

Local Senior Clinical Trial Co-ordinator, Keren Stuart is delighted with the response and sends her thanks to participants and GPs for their willingness to be a part of ASPREE. **Above:** Keren reports Adelaide's progress to Melbourne-based Project Manager, David O'Reilly via Skype.



Warm welcome at Victo

Our newest clinical trial site was officially la University Regional Clinical School in Mildura outreaches across most of Victoria.

Even before ASPREE was launched in the st residents had already signed up to volunteer study has seen "This is really th Australia tha



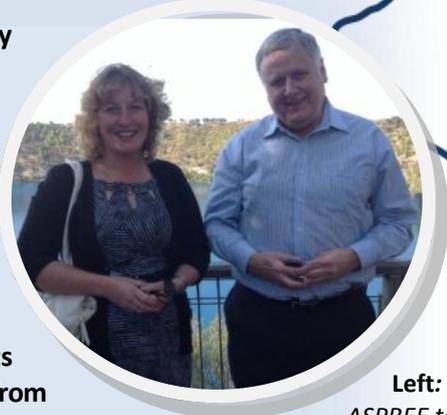
Left: Mildura resident an catches up with Prof Joh

Study moves into Mount Gambier

The Warrnambool ASPREE team recently crossed the border, launching a new ASPREE base in the city of Mount Gambier.

ASPREE Clinical Trial Co-ordinator Mark Johnstone, who is conducting study visits at the site said there had been a tremendous response from volunteers in the area.

"We are hoping to enrol 200 participants in the region, and the show of support from the town has already been fantastic," said Mark.



Left: Prof John McNeil and Warrnambool ASPREE team member Julie Battistello couldn't resist a visit to Mount Gambier's Blue Lake

Launceston's 400th reason to celebrate

Over 100 attendees— ASPREE participants, their friends and family, local GPs and research staff—celebrated Launceston's 400th participant at a study update earlier this year. Gardening guru Peter Cundall, the former host of the ABC program *Gardening Australia*, was a guest speaker.

Professor Mark Nelson, ASPREE Senior Investigator and Chair of General Practice at the University of Tasmania, said at the morning tea that Tasmania had the highest ASPREE participation rate per capita.

"Over 1700 people have joined ASPREE in the state, including a significant number from the Launceston area, and we anticipate many more by the end of recruitment," said Prof Nelson.

Study Update



The ASPREE team enjoyed meeting over 110 participants and guests from Melbourne's West at an update on the ASPR the Altona Senior Citizens Centre recently.

Above: Assoc Prof. Robyn Woods at the Altona st

Research 'On The Map'

Australia's Top End

launched in April at the Monash
ra. This latest site means the study

ate's Northern-most rural city, 140 local
er—one of the best initial responses the
anywhere in Australia.

ne first big trial that's ever been done in
at's allowed country people the

and ASPREE participant Elizabeth,
on McNeil at the Mildura launch

Focus on the Eastern Coast

ASPREE is simultaneously expanding its presence in
South East Victoria and NSW.

The ACT team will continue visiting participants in
southern NSW, while the Victorian team have made
inroads into the East Victorian coast and Wollongong
regions.

The teams have found GPs and health providers in
numerous towns in the area - Mallacoota, Eden,
Pambula, Berridale, Bombala and Merimbula (just to
name a few) - are highly supportive of a clinical trial
that will provide evidence on whether aspirin should be
prescribed to healthy older people.

The reception in Wollongong
is equally positive.



The ASPREE Biobus travels
around and between ASPREE
sites collecting and storing
samples for the world-first
Healthy Ageing Biobank

Wonthaggi Commended

The Southern Victorian town of Wonthaggi has
been recognised for its outstanding support
and contribution to the ASPREE study.

Wonthaggi Medical Group and South
Gippsland Family Medicine were
presented with plaques of
appreciation following the amazing
response from GPs and participants
in the region. Wonthaggi's own Dr
Sharyn Fitzgerald, ASPREE Regional
Manager, travelled back to her home
town to present the plaques.

"Over 100 Wonthaggi residents have enrolled in
ASPREE," said Dr Fitzgerald. "It is great to see
that the spirit of being involved and giving back
to the community continues today with the
support shown by practices and their patients."

Right:
ASPREE's
Dr Sharyn
Fitzgerald presents Wonthaggi
Medical Group's Dr Ben Clark and
Gayle Bloch (centre) with a plaque
of appreciation. (Photo courtesy of
the South Gippsland Sentinel
Times).

SUB-STUDY UPDATES

ASPREE Sub-Studies Going Strong

ASPREE has six sub-studies that investigate certain aspects of healthy ageing. These sub-studies are completely voluntary and offer varying levels of participation. There is absolutely no obligation to be involved in the sub-studies, however your involvement is highly valued and appreciated.

- The largest sub-study is the **ASPREE Healthy Aging Biobank**, which has stored over 7,500 blood specimens to date. The samples will provide an unparalleled resource to help identify precursors to disease that affect older people.
- The new **ACES** sub-study will store saliva samples to help learn about, and possibly treat, genetic risk factors for cancer-specific disease.
- Almost 90% of participants complete and return the **ALSOP (ASPREE Longitudinal Study of Older Persons)** questionnaires. These important social and medical questionnaires, which are mailed to ASPREE participants, will help pinpoint factors affecting the ability of people to age well.
- Newly randomised participants will be offered the opportunity to have the back of their eyes photographed in the **ASPREE-AMD** study later this year. A vehicle fitted with specialised eye photography equipment will collect retinal images to later compare the effect of aspirin on age-related macular degeneration.
- Then there's **SNORE-ASA** (see next column) and **ENVISION**, a neurovascular imaging study to determine if aspirin slows down age-associated change in small vessels of the brain.

All sub-study investigations, such as MRI scans, are provided free of charge. To know more about the ASPREE sub-studies, speak to your ASPREE team member, ring 1800 728 745, visit www.aspree.org or email aspree@monash.edu.



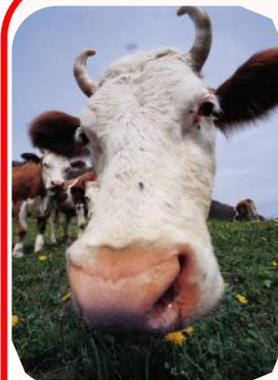
The **SNORE-ASA (Study of Neurocognitive Outcomes, Radiological and Retinal Effects of Aspirin in Sleep Apnoea)** sub-study is now being offered to newly randomised participants in Victoria, Tasmania, the ACT and Adelaide. SNORE-ASA tests the effect of sleep apnoea on brain function and whether aspirin can help prevent any associated decline in thinking and memory. Volunteers are given a small sleep monitoring device (pictured above) to wear overnight in their own bed. A report is compiled, analysed, and a copy sent to the participant's GP.

Wondering Who to Call?

*For medical emergencies, ring 000.
For medical issues, contact your GP.
For trial enquiries, please ring 1800 728 745 or email aspree@monash.edu.
If you do leave a message, please clearly state your full name and ID number. Our hardworking admin team will return your call, usually by the next working day.*

Know someone interested in the ASPREE Study?

Our participants are the first to say how easy it is to be part of ASPREE and the enormous benefit it offers to the wellbeing of future generations. If you know someone who may be suitable or interested in being part of the study - a friend, family member, neighbour or colleague - suggest that they speak to their GP about being in the trial, or give them our contact details—email: aspree@monash.edu or ring **1800 728 745**. More information about the trial is on our website www.aspree.org. Our research team also frequently gives presentations to senior clubs about aspirin and the ASPREE project. If you know of an interested group, please do contact us as above.



WE know we can talk about ASPREE till the cows come home. Now it's time to give someone else a go. So if you're motivated and in the mood,

we'd love to hear from you! Tell us the best piece of advice you could possibly give to anyone. Post it in a letter or email to aspree@monash.edu. We'll put the best on our website and in the next newsletter accompanied by your first initial and town/city.

ASPREE Funding Organisations

- National Institute on Aging (NIA/NIH in the USA)
- National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia (NHMRC)
- National Cancer Institute (NCI in the USA)
- CSIRO
- Victorian Cancer Agency (VCA)

ASPREE Collaborating Organisations

- Monash University
- Menzies Research Institute (TAS)
- Australian National University
- The University of Melbourne
- The University of Adelaide
- Berman Centre for Outcomes & Clinical Research (Minnesota)

Stay up to date on the ASPREE study at **www.aspree.org**

Online now:

The 'I've Been Everywhere' ASPREE Biobus Pictorial ASPREE response to the aspirin-melanoma study in post-menopausal women 'The Big Picture on Aspirin' - An interview with Prof John McNeil
If you haven't seen our Community Service Announcement featuring Sir Gus Nossal— check it out on our website
Plus we are on twitter! [@aspree_us](https://twitter.com/aspree_us)

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