

Presentation

300 mg soluble tablet

Pharmacology

Aspirin inhibits platelet aggregation. This can prevent or limit clot formation in a coronary artery.

Onset is within 10 minutes.

Indication

Acute coronary syndrome (ACS)

- chest pain / discomfort or shortness of breath, suspected to be of cardiac origin

Patients with known angina are treated as ACS if

- symptoms occur at rest
- symptoms not relieved quickly by rest or GTN

Contraindications

- allergy to aspirin or NSAIDs
- bleeding disorders
- current active bleeding (e.g. gastric ulcers)
- asthma – if the patient is 'aspirin sensitive'
- patient < 16 years

Adverse Effects

- allergic reaction
- increased bleeding tendency
- gastric irritation (unlikely with one tablet)
- asthma (approximately 10% of asthmatics can have an asthma attack caused by taking aspirin / NSAIDs)

Dose

300 mg (one tablet)

chewed and swallowed, or dissolved in a small amount of water

Notes

- aspirin is NOT used in St John (NSW) to treat pain or fever
- aspirin CAN be given if the patient is already taking regular aspirin or warfarin
- in the setting of acute coronary syndrome, aspirin is used for its anti-platelet effect, and not to provide analgesia