

More Pain Relievers Called Into Question Study Stirs Concern About Heart Safety of Over-Counter Drugs

**Associated Press
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By Marilyn Marchione

"With prescription drugs Vioxx and Bextra already pulled from the market, a study has raised disturbing questions about the heart safety of over-the-counter pain relievers such as Advil, Motrin and Aleve."

Those taking the "drugs for at least 6 months had twice the risk of dying of a heart attack, stroke or other heart-related problem."

The study was released at an American Association for Cancer Research conference in Anaheim.

"The findings add to the suspicion that the heart risk extends beyond the so-called COX-2 drugs – Bextra, Vioxx and Celebrex – to the larger family of medications known as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, or NSAIDs, which include naproxen, ibuprofen and virtually all other over-the-counter pain relievers."

"To the best of our knowledge, these are the first data to support putting a [black] box warning on NSAIDs, not just COX-2s," said Dr. Andrew Dannenberg, a Cornell University scientist who helped do the study."

"The NSAID users were dying at twice the rate of the others from heart related problems."

"Risk was highest among ibuprofen users who were nearly three times more likely to die of cardiovascular disease than non NSAID users."

USA TODAY reported the following on this study, June 1, 2005

Study Links Pain Relievers and Breast Cancer, by Rita Rubin

"The latest study, out today in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute, is the first to suggest that long-term ibuprofen or aspirin use might actually raise the risk of breast cancer."

"Marshall's (Dr. Sarah Marshall from USC) study analyzed data on 114,460 women in the ongoing California Teachers Study. The women were 22 to 85 years old and free of breast cancer when they enrolled in the study a decade ago."

"When the scientists broke their findings down by pain reliever or type of breast cancer, they found:"

- "Women who took ibuprofen daily for at least 5 years were about 50% more likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer than those who did not take the drug regularly."
- "Women who took aspirin daily for at least 5 years were 80% more likely to develop breast cancers that were not sensitive to the hormones estrogen or progesterone than women who were not regular users of aspirin."