

1 Problem

Step 1. Outline the Problem

What	Problem(s)	Risk of serious bleeding
When	Date	Report released 2012
	Differences	Daily use of low dose aspirin
Where	Physical Location	USA
	Task being performed	Treating patients
Impact to the Goals		
	Safety	Patients at higher risk of GI bleeding
	Frequency	Millions of Americans take daily aspirin

RISKS OF LOW DOSE ASPIRIN

Cause Map

A study has found that the risks associated with low dose aspirin may outweigh the benefits for many patients.

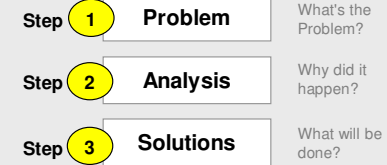
"People don't even consider aspirin a medicine, or consider that you can have side effects from it. That's the most challenging part of aspirin therapy."

- Dr. Alison Bailey, director of the cardiac rehabilitation program at the Gill Heart Institute at the University of Kentucky

Cause Mapping is a Root Cause Analysis method that captures basic cause-and-effect relationships supported with evidence.

CAUSE MAPPING

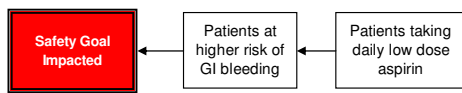
Problem Solving • Incident Investigation • Root Cause Analysis



2 Analysis

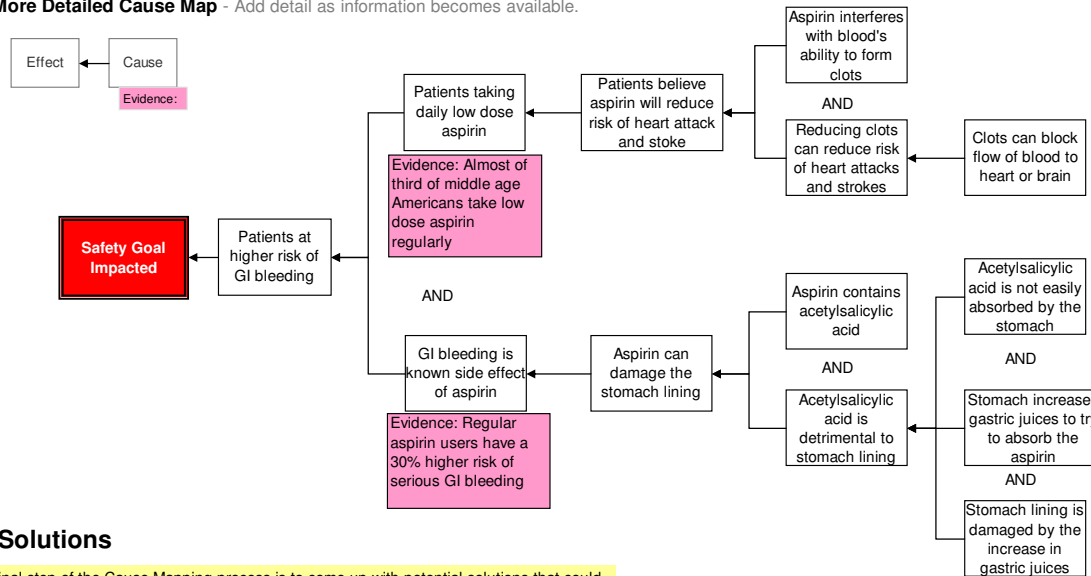
Basic Level Cause Map - Start with simple Why questions.

Basic Cause-and-Effect



Nearly a third of all middle age Americans take a daily aspirin to reduce the likelihood of a heart attack or stroke. A recent study determined that the risk of serious bleeding episodes associated with regular use of low dose aspirin may be greater than the benefits.

More Detailed Cause Map - Add detail as information becomes available.



More Detailed Cause-and-Effect

A recent study determined that the risks associated with regular use of low dose aspirin may outweigh the benefits for many patients. The researchers determined that regular aspirin users were 10 percent less likely to have a heart event and 20 percent less likely to have a nonfatal heart attack. These statistics sound good except that regular aspirin users are also around 30 percent more likely to have serious gastrointestinal (GI) bleeding. The overall risk of death was the same for both patients who regularly used aspirin and those who did not.

This study looked at nine randomized studies of aspirin use and included more than 100,000 patients. The study only included patients who had not had a heart attack or stroke and involved giving participants either an aspirin or a placebo to see the benefits of regular doses of aspirin.

These findings have the potential to affect many people since nearly a third of middle-age Americans take a low dose aspirin regularly. Benefits from aspirin seem to outweigh the risks for people who have a history of heart attacks, but this study calls into question the benefits for patients who are hoping to prevent their first heart attack or stroke.

This issue can be analyzed by building a Cause Map, an intuitive, visual form of root cause analysis. In this example, the safety goal is the main goal that would be considered because of the higher risk of GI bleeding. The higher risk of bleeding is caused by the fact that patients are taking aspirin regularly and that GI bleeding is a known side effect of aspirin. People take aspirin because it has been shown to reduce the likelihood of blood clots. Reducing blood clots will in turn reduce the risk of heart attacks and stroke since blood clots have the potential to block flow to the brain or heart.

3 Solutions

The final step of the Cause Mapping process is to come up with potential solutions that could be used to prevent the problem from reoccurring. The study determined that there is no one size fit all answer to the question of whether low dose aspirin should be taken daily. Each individual case needs to be reviewed to determine the best course of action.

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