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Epidemiology as a contact sport: Increasing primary prevention through aspirin use

Monday, 29 September 2014
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm – Meakins Amphitheater – Rm 521
McIntyre Medical Building

ALL ARE WELCOME

SYNOPSIS:
Cardiovascular diseases (CVD), specifically acute myocardial infarction (AMI) and stroke are leading causes of disability and death in the United States. While significant progress in the prevention, detection and treatment of these diseases is apparent, much remains to be done. Among the most effective approaches is primary prevention strategies designed to reduce incident or first events. The reduction of cigarette smoking, hypertension and cholesterol all contribute to recently observed declines in CVD. One CVD prevention approach receiving increased recent attention is low dose aspirin. In 1989, the Physician’s Health Study showed the benefit of low dose aspirin in preventing AMI among healthy middle-aged men. Similar results for stroke were observed in the Women’s Health Study (2005). There have been many other studies. These and other data led the U.S. Preventive Service Task Force in 2009 to publish “recommendations” advocating use for primary prevention in men 45-79 years and women 55-79 years at increased CVD risk. This recommendation was reinforced in the CDC Healthy People 2020 Plan and the Million Hearts Initiative of the CMS and CDC (2011). Despite these recommendations for aspirin use, many do not use aspirin and others are self-treating to no benefit. Based on observational and pilot data, I will discuss a group-randomized trial and the State of
Minnesota will serve as the test platform with Upper Midwest states (IA, ND, SD, WI) serving as added controls.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Describe the most recent scientific evidence linking aspirin to the prevention of cardiovascular diseases  
2. Describe the use of epidemiologic methods to develop novel community-based prevention programs  
3. Describe a new community randomized trial to test the population effects of increasing aspirin use

**BIO:**

Russell Luepker, MD, MS is Mayo Professor in the Division of Epidemiology and Community Health at the University of Minnesota and Professor of Medicine (Cardiology). He graduated from the University of Rochester Medical School and interned at the University of California at San Diego. After three years in the USPHS and Johns Hopkins Medical School, he did a residency in internal medicine and fellowship in cardiology at the Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston. He also obtained a masters degree in epidemiology from the Harvard School of Public Health. Dr. Luepker’s epidemiology research involves both observation and intervention studies. He is the principal investigator of the Minnesota Heart Study, a long running population-based study of trends in risk factors on cardiovascular disease. He has also been involved in clinical trials designed to prevent cardiovascular disease. And he has had leadership roles in major community-based trials of cardiovascular disease including the Minnesota Heart Health Program, REACT and CATCH. Dr. Luepker teaches a number of courses in epidemiology and clinical research. He is a member of numerous national and international committees.