

## Do you have aspirin-sensitive asthma?



About 40 percent of asthmatic patients who have nasal polyps and sinusitis are also allergic to aspirin. Even though you may have been able to take aspirin in the past, you are now unable to take it



without having a sudden asthma attack or other allergic symptoms. Even though you may avoid aspirin, symptoms like nasal congestion, nasal polyps and repeated sinus infections continue.



# Aspirin Desensitization Program



Member  
NewYork-Presbyterian Healthcare System  
Affiliate: Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons

160 North Midland Avenue, Nyack, NY 10960  
845.348.2000



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Nyack Hospital and John Bosso, M.D., Medical Director of Allergy and Asthma Consultants of Rockland and Bergen, have created a new Aspirin-Desensitization Program – the only one of its kind in the area - that reintroduces aspirin to asthmatic patients in a controlled medical setting. Successful desensitization reduces upper and lower respiratory inflammation. This translates into decreased nasal congestion, fewer nasal polyps, less sinusitis and improved asthma symptoms. Patients require fewer sinus surgeries and have a decreased need for oral cortico steroids.

## Commonly Asked Questions

### *What is Aspirin Desensitization?*

In 1979, researchers at Scripps Clinic began studying aspirin sensitivity in asthmatic patients. They noticed that with each successive dose of aspirin the severity of attacks would lessen. After several small doses of aspirin, the allergic reaction disappeared altogether. Under carefully controlled challenges, patients were gradually able to take full adult-strength doses of aspirin. Some patients said they felt better and could breathe easier in both their nose and bronchial tubes and had a better sense of smell. Dr. Bosso completed a clinical fellowship in Allergy/Immunology at Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation in La Jolla, California – the architects of aspirin desensitization.

### *What is an aspirin challenge?*

This is a test to see if you are allergic by giving you a small dose of aspirin in a capsule then observing your symptoms. Patients react to different doses and may have different symptoms. In many cases, the first dose is too small for the aspirin-sensitive patient to react to so increasing doses are used, waiting three hours between each dose.

### *Is Aspirin Desensitization Safe and what can I expect ?*

Yes. If you have not had a prior aspirin challenge to determine your provoking doses a small dose of aspirin will be utilized at first. A nurse will stay with you during the challenge. As soon as you begin to have symptoms, you will be given a treatment to quickly and effectively reverse the reaction. The major risk in this treatment is that you may have a more severe reaction as the dosage is increased. This is why the treatment is undertaken in Nyack Hospital's Ambulatory Care Center under constant medical supervision.

### *Is this treatment recommended for all asthmatics and will it cure me?*

This treatment will only work will those who aspirin triad syndrome or Samter's triad syndrome where all three conditions are present: an allergy to aspirin or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, nasal/sinus polyps, and asthma. While it will not cure you of your asthma we have found that more than a year after being desensitized to aspirin 87 percent of patients have reduced symptoms – less nasal congestion, fewer nasal polyps and less sinusitis. Asthma symptoms have improved and patients require less sinus surgeries and their need for oral steroids is also reduced.

## About Dr. Bosso



*John V. Bosso M.D., FAAAAI, FAAAAI is medical director of Allergy and Asthma Consultants of Rockland and Bergen with offices in West Nyack, New York and Westwood, New Jersey. He is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and the American Board of Allergy and Immunology, and a graduate of SUNY Buffalo, School of Medicine. He completed a medical residency at SUNY Downstate and an Allergy-Immunology fellowship at Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation in La Jolla California.*

*He has published extensively in the area of aspirin sensitivity as well as asthma and food allergies and is a fellow of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI) and the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI). Since 1999, he has been consistently ranked as one of the New York metropolitan area's best allergy-immunology specialists by Castle-Connolly. Since 2003 he has been named one of America's Top Physicians by the Consumers Research Council of America. He is Chief of Allergy/Immunology at Nyack Hospital and is Director and Founder of their Aspirin Desensitization Program.*

For more information about aspirin desensitization please call Dr. Bosso at his practice in West Nyack, New York at 845-353-9600 or his practice in Westwood, New Jersey at 201-666-8500 or log onto [www.allergymd.yourmd.com](http://www.allergymd.yourmd.com). Or go to Nyack Hospital's website at [www.nyackhospital.org](http://www.nyackhospital.org).

I've lived with asthma my whole life and had nasal polyps so bad for the last 15 years that I'd lost my sense of smell. Since undergoing aspirin desensitization I've seen these symptoms disappear. I can smell again! It's truly been a transforming experience!

– Max Bartko, Greenwich , CT

I hadn't been able to taste or smell for 29 years. When I couldn't smell a gas leak in my own home, the life threatening urgency of the situation made me try again to do something about it.

I went to five different specialists and even contemplated surgery. One doctor told me: 'You don't need surgery - you need to have aspirin desensitization'. He said there are only three doctors in the nation who are trained to do it, and lucky for you, one of them - Dr. Bosso - is right here.'

Dr. Bosso was great, and even though my allergy to aspirin was very severe, I wasn't afraid during the procedure. They are right there with you every step of the way; you are never left alone. The second day they brought me my lunch and I was like: Oh my gosh, I can smell my lunch!

Aspirin desensitization has been a wonderful, wonderful thing!

–Ginger Blodgett, Haskell, NJ

Before I underwent aspirin desensitization I was constantly blowing my nose. People didn't want to sit next to me during dinner parties. This went on for 20 years. I would have surgeries to remove my nasal polyps but they would always come back. My allergist had heard Dr. Bosso speak at a seminar and she recommended aspirin desensitization. That was a blessed five years ago. The change for me has been unbelievable. I don't have to walk around with a box of tissues all the time!

–Nadine Levy, South Salem, NY