***Taking a low-dose of aspirin may increase the chances of survival of cancer treatment patients by up to 20 per cent and help stop the disease from spreading, a new study suggests.***

PTI  |  24 April 2016, 6:40 PM IST

London, Apr 24 : Taking a low-dose of aspirin may increase the chances of survival of cancer treatment patients by up to 20 per cent and help stop the disease from spreading, a new study suggests.

"There is a growing body of evidence that taking aspirin is of significant benefit in reducing some cancers," said Peter Elwood from Cardiff University in the UK.

"Whilst we know a low-dose of aspirin has been shown to reduce the incidence of cancer, its role in the treatment of cancer remains uncertain. As a result, we set out to conduct a systematic search of all the scientific literature," Elwood said.

"Our review, based on the available evidence, suggests that low-dose aspirin taken by patients with bowel, breast or prostate cancer, in addition to other treatments, is associated with a reduction in deaths of about 15-20 per cent, together with a reduction in the spread of the cancer," he added.

For the study, researchers looked at all of the available data including five randomised trials and forty two observational studies of colorectal, breast and prostate cancers.

They found a significant reduction in mortality and cancer spread by patients who took a low-level dose of aspirin in addition to their cancer treatment.

"A mutation - known as PIK3CA - was present in about 20 per cent of patients, and appeared to explain much of the reduction in colon cancer mortality by aspirin," said Elwood.

However, more evidence is needed to support low-dose aspirin as an effective additional treatment of cancer, researchers said.

The study identified five healthy behaviours as being integral to having the best chance of leading a disease-free lifestyle - regular exercise, non-smoking, a healthy bodyweight, a healthy diet and a low alcohol intake.

The findings were published in the journal PLOS ONE. SAN SAR SAR