**TODAY'S PAPER » NATIONAL**

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**Painkillers linked to heart failure, says study**

Widely used prescription and non-prescription painkillers are associated with an increased risk of hospital admission for heart failure, according to a study released on Thursday.

The drugs in question are so-called NSAIDs, or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, including several known as COX-2 inhibitors.

Many are among the most commonly used drugs to alleviate pain and inflammation, and some were introduced over a century ago with minimal safety checks.

The broad link between the use of NSAIDs and heart failure is well established, but which drugs pose the greatest risk, and at what doses, remains poorly understood.

The researchers emphasised that the study was observational, meaning that it did not benefit from the controlled conditions of an experiment and thus could not draw firm conclusions about cause and effect. — AFP