

# PHARMAC

---

## Pharmaceutical Management Agency

*Media release*

### **Cartia listing provides more choice for heart risk patients**

The popular Cartia brand of low-dose aspirin is now subsidised by PHARMAC.

Chief Executive Wayne McNee says the listing of Cartia provides further choice for patients wanting to reduce their chance of having a heart attack or stroke. Cartia is the second brand of low dose aspirin to be subsidised following the decision to list Multichem's brand in October 2005.

Low dose aspirin (100mg), a blood-thinning agent, is a low cost and highly effective way for people to prevent heart attack and stroke.

Wayne McNee says low dose aspirin is available over-the-counter and a large number of people already pay for their own. Cartia is the most well-known brand, and the decision to subsidise it means these patients will now be able to take advantage of Government subsidies.

"Most patients taking low-dose aspirin are aged 65 or over, so people enrolled in PHOs will pay a maximum of \$3 for a 90-day prescription," Wayne McNee says.

"Low dose aspirin is a highly cost-effective way for people to reduce their risk of having a heart attack or stroke, so it makes sense for PHARMAC to fund it. This decision will mean that people will be able to reduce the cost of taking care of their own health."

PHARMAC estimates that up to 200,000 patients could be prescribed low dose aspirin, with expenditure estimated at \$17 million over five years.

[ends]

For more information call Simon England (021) 863-342.