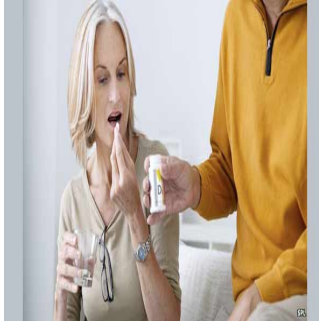


Statin Therapy Reduces CVD Risk in Women



According to a new study published in *The Lancet*, statin treatment reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease in women.

There has been much debate about the effectiveness of statin therapy in women as compared to men, especially when used for primary prevention. This particular study compares the effects of statin therapy between men and women.

The findings of the study confirm that statins are beneficial for women who have already had a cardiovascular event. In addition, statins are effective in women who have not yet developed cardiovascular disease but are at an increased risk of it.

According to Anthony Keech, Professor of Medicine, Cardiology and Epidemiology at the University of Sydney and the lead investigator of this study, "these results resolve a major uncertainty about the value of treating women with statin therapy, and reinforce the need for recommendations to treat women to be included in national and international guidelines."

Prof. Keech also highlights that since women develop cardiovascular disease later in life than men, they have been under-represented in most major statin trials. That is why there has been uncertainty regarding the benefits of statin therapy in women.

During the study, 174,000 patients from 27 different trials were analysed. Statin therapy reduced the risk of a major vascular event by 21 percent for each 1 mmol/L reduction in LDL cholesterol that was achieved. This translated into a 9 percent reduction for each 1 mmol/L reduction in LDL-cholesterol in the overall risk of death in both men and women.

Among the patients analysed, it was clearly evident that the percentage risk reductions were similar in both men and women, irrespective of their history of CVD. Thus, the analysis showed, beyond any reasonable doubt, that women gain the same benefits from statin therapy as men.

Prof. Keech is confident that the results of this study will reassure doctors that treatment guidelines for statins can be applied equally toward both men and women. This is important since the risk of heart attack and stroke is as big a problem in women as they are in men. The risk of CVD can be significantly reduced by taking a statin so the role statin therapy can play in minimising this risk should not be undermined.

Professor Len Kritharides, Chair of the Cardiovascular Health Advisory Committee of the Heart Foundation of Australia, welcomed these new results as very important: "These results should give great encouragement to patients and their doctors that lowering cholesterol with statins prevents cardiovascular disease."

Source: University of Sydney
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