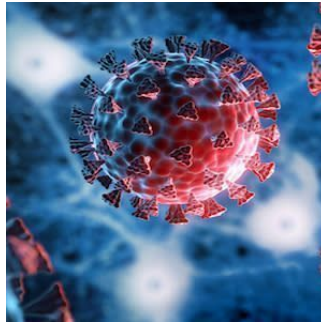

Statins Linked to Reduced COVID-19 Severity, Risk of Death



A new study of more than 38,000 patients suggests that statins may reduce the risk of death and severity of COVID-19.

According to Ettore Crimi, Professor of Anesthesiology and Critical Care Medicine and lead author of the study, statins decrease inflammation which may help reduce the severity of COVID-19. The study also shows that regular statin use may reduce the risk of death and improve outcomes in hospitalised patients with COVID-19.

This is an extensive study of regular statin use in patients with COVID-19. Study researchers analysed the electronic medical records of 38,875 patients hospitalised for COVID-19 at 185 hospitals in the U.S. 30% of the patients regularly used statins to treat high cholesterol. Findings show that statin users had a 37% lower risk of dying from COVID-19 compared to those who did not use statins. Regular statin users were also less likely to be discharged to hospice, be admitted to the ICU or develop blood clots. In addition, statin users had shorter hospital stays and less time on a ventilator.

COVID-19 causes inflammation. The immune system sometimes creates further inflammation because of the infection. This damages the body, resulting in difficulty breathing as well as damage to the lungs, kidneys, heart, brain and vascular system. According to the study researchers, the anti-inflammatory actions of statins cool the process so that the severity of the COVID-19 infection is less.

Statins are one of the most commonly prescribed drugs. According to the American Heart Association, one in four Americans over 40 take statins to lower their cholesterol and reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

These findings highlight the importance of identifying medicines that could potentially be repurposed for other illnesses. Statins could be a cost-effective solution against COVID-19 severity. However, their benefits need to be further studied through more clinical trials.

Source: American Society of Anesthesiologists
Image Credit: iStock

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