



Statins May Reduce Delirium in ICU Patients



According to a study recently published in the American Thoracic Society's American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care, administering statins to critically ill patients before they were admitted to hospital may help prevent delirium, a state of sudden, severe confusion.

Lead author Valerie Page, Watford General Hospital in Watford, England, and her research team, investigated 470 intensive care patients. Of this test group, only the 151 who had previously been taking statins were given statins while in the hospital.

It was noted that patients who received statins the previous evening had a much lower risk of delirium the next day, as well as reduced levels of a marker for inflammation. As per the study's authors, this beneficial effect may be due to the anti-inflammatory effects of statins.

Commenting on the findings Dr Page noted statin treatment should be continued to help prevent delirium in critically ill patients who received statins before being admitted. She went on to say that despite the pathogenesis of delirium is not being fully understood, these data were consistent with a neuro-inflammatory cause and suggested that the anti-inflammatory effects of statins may contribute to the effects of statin treatment on delirium.

Even though an association between statin therapy and reduced risk of delirium in hospitalized patients was found in the, it did not prove a cause-and-effect relationship.

In conclusion Dr Page noted that in order to shed more light on the relationship between statin therapy and delirium there was currently another study taking place among critically ill patients who are on ventilators, in which people were randomly assigned to either statins or an inactive placebo drug.

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