

Statin Drug Use nearly Doubles your Risk of Diabetes, Study Claims

By: David Gutierrez, Natural News

The use of cholesterol-lowering statin drugs could double your risk of developing diabetes, suggests a study conducted by researchers from the VA North Texas Health System and the University of Texas Southwestern that was published in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine* on April 28.

Previous studies have shown a link between statin use and increased diabetes rates, but the new study is the first to show that statins seem to increase diabetes risk even in otherwise healthy people who are not predisposed to the disease.

"In our study, statin use was associated with a significantly higher risk of new-onset diabetes, even in a very healthy population," lead author Ishak Mansi said. "The risk of diabetes with statins has been known, but up until now it was thought that this might be due to the fact that people who were prescribed statins had greater medical risks to begin with."

Diabetes complications also more likely

The researchers examined the medical records of approximately 26,000 people who were enrolled in the military health system Tricare between October 2003 and March 2012. They used a particularly robust method of data analysis known as propensity score matching, in which 3,351 statin users were matched with an equal number of non-users who were very similar to them in 42 separate health and demographic variables. This is considered a particularly effective way of ruling out potential confounding factors.

The analysis showed that people taking statins had an 87 percent higher risk of developing diabetes. The diabetes that they developed was also more likely to be serious; statin users were 250 percent more likely to develop diabetes with complications than non-users.

The study is the first to show a connection between statins and diabetes complications. Confirming prior results, the analysis also showed that statin users were 14 percent more likely to become overweight.

The researchers also performed a more conventional analysis, directly comparing the roughly 4,000 statin users in the sample with the 22,000 non-users while controlling for certain known risk factors. This analysis found that statin users were more than 100 percent more likely to develop diabetes than non-users.

Both methods of analysis showed that the higher the dose of statins a person was taking, the higher their risk of obesity, diabetes and diabetes complications.

Lifestyle changes safer, more effective

The study suggests that the short-term trials used to secure drug approval might not "fully describe the risks and benefits of long-term statin use," Mansi said.

Patients should be made aware of the full risks of the drugs doctors prescribe, he added.

"Knowing the risks may motivate a patient to quit smoking, rather than swallow a tablet, or to lose weight and exercise," Mansi said. "Ideally, it is better to make those lifestyle changes and avoid taking statins if possible."

An emerging body of research is suggesting that statins are not only dangerous, but that they do not even reduce rates of heart disease or death. Indeed, some studies suggest that statins might actually raise the risk of cardiovascular disease. This is because although statins are great at lowering cholesterol, new findings suggest that blood cholesterol is simply a marker of heart disease risk and not a cause of the disease.

A recent analysis published in the *Expert Review of Clinical Pharmacology* concluded that the benefits of statins have been consistently exaggerated while their risks have been downplayed. The analysis showed that statins reduced cardiovascular disease by only a paltry 1 percent. Greater benefits claimed by drug advocates are "statistical deception," they said.

"The adverse effects suffered by people taking statins are more common than reported in the media and at medical conferences," the researchers wrote. "Increased rates of cancer, cataracts, diabetes, cognitive impairments and musculoskeletal disorders more than offset the modest cardiovascular benefits of statin treatment."

(Natural News Science)

Sources:

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