

Jefferson Cardiology Association Happenings

Daily Soda Increases Cardiovascular Risk

A recently published study from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention projected that drinking one 12oz sugary soda may increase risk for cardiovascular risk by 30% independent of total calories, obesity or other risk factors. Americans consume on average about 15% of their total calories from sugars added to foods during processing. Of this, 37% of added sugars come from beverages with added sugars.

It has previously been recognized that high sugar consumption is associated with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, obesity and hypertension. Previous studies did not examine the relationship between added sugar and cardiovascular mortality on a national level.

There has been disagreement as to how much added sugar is acceptable in a healthy diet. The Institute of Medicine recommends less than 25% of daily calories from sugar. The World Health Organization recommends less than 10%. The American Heart Association recommends less than 5% for women and 7.5% for men.

The greatest source of added sugar came from sweetened beverages with lesser amounts from grain based desserts, fruit drinks, dairy desserts and candy.

The risk of cardiovascular mortality is increased once added sugar exceeds 15% of daily calories. An example is drinking one 20oz Mountain Dew in a 2000 calorie daily diet. The risk increases as sugar content increases with a four fold rise in risk of cardiovascular

death in persons consuming on third or more of daily calories as added sugar.

Risks of Adding Aspirin to Coumadin in Patients with Coronary Disease and Atrial Fibrillation

There has been a perception that patients with stable coronary or arterial disease need an antiplatelet agent such as aspirin or Plavix even if they take a blood thinner such as Coumadin for atrial fibrillation. A recently published study demonstrated an increased risk of serious bleeding without any reduction in coronary events.

A committee of the European Society of Cardiology explicitly states that antiplatelet therapy should not be given to patients on blood thinners who have stable coronary and peripheral artery disease. European and U.S. guidelines recommend dual antiplatelet therapy after acute coronary stenting for one month to one year.

In the recently published study, the risk of heart attack or coronary death was the same for atrial fibrillation patients with stable coronary disease regardless if the subjects took coumadin alone, coumadin with aspirin or coumadin plus aspirin and Plavix after a 3 year observation period. However, those adding aspirin to coumadin had 50% higher bleeding risk and an 84% increased bleeding risk was seen in combining aspirin, Plavix and coumadin.

Optimism Quashed

There has been much excitement over the last several years about a new technique to treat resistant hypertension, high blood pressure. A technique has been developed to treat resistant hyper-

tension that could help patients taking 3 or more hypertensive medications simultaneously without effective control.

This technique involves placement of a catheter in the renal, kidney, arteries and applying a burst of radiofrequency energy to nerves in the artery walls. Initial reports indicated up to 20 mm mercury drop in blood pressure with this technique. There was also speculation that this technique could be useful to treat congestive heart failure.

However, the recently reported SYMPLICITY HNT-3 trial failed to demonstrate the expected effective results on treatment of resistant hypertension. There were no safety problems. For the time being, it is uncertain whether this technology will be helpful. A European trial was cancelled. Researchers will mull over the data and future events will determine if there is a role for this technology.

Staff News



We would like to wish a very Happy Birthday to our employees celebrating this month, Mary Banaszak and Joanne Bondi and Anna Pavlovskaya. Hope you all have a great day! ☺

National Heart Month

February is national heart month. Remember to eat healthy, continue to exercise, stop smoking and consume alcohol only in moderation. Always remember that we will continue to offer a comprehensive array of services to meet our patients needs. Thank you for your continued support and confidence in our practice.

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