

Jefferson Cardiology Association Happenings

Stroke Incidence Down in U.S.

A recent study published on line in the July 15 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reported a decrease in the incidence of stroke in the U.S. since 1987. This reduction in stroke was observed among both white and black populations.

Specifically, the study was organized to study 16,000 persons age 45-64 beginning in 1987-1989 including persons in Minneapolis, Maryland, North Carolina and Mississippi. More than half the participants were women and a large sample of black participants were included.

The participants were then followed over 22.5 years. During this time, 7.5% had a stroke. Over this period, there was a significant reduction in strokes in both white and black participants. However the reduction in strokes was predominantly seen in participants over age 65. Despite reduction in frequency of stroke in both races, the incidence of stroke in blacks was twice that of whites.

In contrast to the incidence of stroke, the risk of stroke mortality was predominantly observed in those under 65.

The study was not designed to determine the cause of reduction in stroke and stroke mortality. It was thought several factors played a role. Improved control of blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, cholesterol and atrial fibrillation was thought to be of key importance. Also improved stroke care also was thought to be important. An editorial commented brain health was

unlikely to improve until younger people exercised better control of diet, smoking, cholesterol, obesity and an inactive life style.

TransCatheter Mitral Valve Re- placement

Replacing the aortic valve without surgery is becoming more common in high risk patients in recent years in the U.S. and longer in Europe. Now there are reports of replacing the mitral valve without surgery which appears more complicated and difficult compared to non surgical aortic valve replacement.

Non surgical mitral valve replacement was a hot topic at a recently completed meeting in Paris. The first cases were performed in Copenhagen over the last two years. Technology is in a state of development to perform this procedure. The procedure is performed by a direct puncture of the heart. Other cases were performed in London, Switzerland, Toronto, and Vancouver.

In recent years, a clip has been introduced to close the mitral valve without surgery. The clip reduces but does not eliminate leakage of the mitral valve. The non surgical valve will eliminate such leakage.

As stated, this technique is more difficult than non surgical aortic valve replacement. Patients must be selected before the volume of leaking blood damages their heart muscle. In the years to come, experience with this procedure will determine what role this has for our patients with leaking mitral valves.

Testing Cholesterol Without Fasting

A recent study was performed to determine whether fasting or non fasting

blood samples for LDL, bad cholesterol, made a difference in long term outcomes. It was found that outcomes were the same for fasting or non fasting cholesterol samples. The major potential problem is that some laboratories calculate LDL cholesterol using triglyceride values that can be thrown off by high triglyceride values. In recent years, some labs are now measuring direct LDL and this value is not dependent on a formula including triglycerides. Such labs will eliminate the need to fast to

check LDL cholesterol although measuring triglycerides will always require fasting.

Staff News

We would like to wish a very Happy Birthday to all of our staff members celebrating this month. They include Tonya Fohr, our business manager, Susan Myers, medical assistant Tina Mankin. Best wishes to all of you!

Grilled Summer Squash Pizza

1 teaspoon olive oil
1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1 medium zucchini cut into 1/4 inch slices
1 medium squash cut into 1/4 inch slices

Cooking Spray
1 (12 inch) packaged pizza crust
2 plum tomatoes cut into 1/8 in slices
1/4 cup finely grated Romano cheese
2 tablespoons fresh sliced basil
1/2 teaspoon finely chopped oregano

1. Prepare grill.
2. Combine oil, vinegar, salt, pepper, zucchini slices and yellow squash slices in a large bowl, tossing gently to coat. Place squash mixture on grill rack coated with cooking spray; grill 2 minutes on each side or until tender.
3. Reduce grill temperature to medium.
4. Lightly coat pizza crust with cooking spray; grill one minute on each side or until lightly toasted. Arrange zucchini and squash over crust. Arrange tomatoes over squash; sprinkle with Romano cheese. Grill 5 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Remove from grill; sprinkle with basil and oregano.

HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!!



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