
Jefferson Cardiology Association Happenings

Blood Pressure Goals in Hypertensive Diabetics

In October, this newsletter reported the findings of the SPRINT study demonstrating that blood pressure should be reduced under 120 rather than 140mm of mercury in persons at cardiovascular risk. However this study did not include diabetics.

Previous studies showed no advantage to diabetics with intense blood pressure reduction. At the recent meeting of American Heart Association, long-term follow-up of the ACCORD study evaluated blood pressure treatment goals in diabetics. The initial results of this study did not support aggressive blood pressure reduction in diabetics. Investigators now report a statistical trend toward lowering hypertensive diabetics blood pressure under 120. The lead investigator suggests that not enough patients were included to reach statistical significance and more aggressive blood pressure reduction is warranted.

Coronary Bypass vs Stents in Diabetics

There have been several prior studies demonstrating with diabetics with blockage in more than one coronary artery have better long-term results with bypass surgery compared with multiple coronary stents. Another study from Canada was presented at the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions that demonstrated better results for bypass surgery in diabetics with multivessel disease.

Concern was raised that a national registry has demonstrated that more diabetics with unstable coronary syndrome are being treated predominantly with angioplasty and stenting rather than bypass surgery with better long-term outcomes.

In diabetics with multiple blocked arteries there were fewer deaths, heart attacks and stroke over time in those treated with coronary bypass surgery.

Reducing Heart Damage from Cancer Treatment

It has been known for many years that certain medications used to treat cancer may cause heart damage. Atacand, used for hypertension and heart failure, may reduce heart damage from radiation therapy and chemotherapy in cancer patients. This drug was given to a group of women treated for breast cancer and results were compared with those women treated with a placebo or fake pill. Those women given Atacand had significantly less weakening of their heart mass when compared to the placebo group. These beneficial results were not seen with beta blockers.

Because cancer treatment has been recognized to cause heart damage, many referral medical centers are now setting up departments of cardio-oncology to recognize early cardiac complications of cancer treatment and try to prevent long-term cardiac problems in cancer survivors.

Watchman Recall and Coverage Limitation

The Watchman device has previously been described in this newsletter and is a device to seal the left atrial appendage, the cardiac site where clots develop in atrial fibrillation patients. The device has held promise to protect atrial fibrillation patients who can't take blood thinners. Because of concerns about risk for blood leakage, the FDA, Federal Drug Administration, issued a recall of this device. This will compel the manufacturer to correct the technical problem. Mean-

while, Medicare has set up multiple criteria to be met before reimbursement is paid for inserting this device.

Happy Thanksgiving

We would like to wish everyone and their family a very happy and safe Thanksgiving.

Happy Veterans Day

To our men and women in uniform...past, present and future: God bless you and thank you for your service!

Ginger Snap Pumpkin Pie

Ingredients:

10 gingersnap cookies	2 tbsp low fat margarine
1 (16 oz) can pumpkin puree	4 egg whites
¾ cup sugar	1 tbsp pumpkin pie spice
1 (12 oz.) can evaporated skim milk	Non-stick spray

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray 9" pie pan with non-stick spray. Combine gingersnap cookies and margarine in food processor and pulse until fine. Form crust by lining pan with crumbs. Combine the remaining ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Mix thoroughly and pour into crust. Bake 30-40 minutes at 350 degrees or until a toothpick inserted in center of pie comes out clean. Cool and serve.



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