

# CARDIOVASCULAR NEWS



## Studies show Lipitor® effectively reduces cardiac events

Studies show that patients using Pfizer's Lipitor® (atorvastatin calcium), a cholesterol-lowering medicine, have a significantly reduced risk of cardiovascular events.

In the three-year Anglo-Scandinavian Cardiac Outcomes Trial: Lipid-Lowering Arm (ASCOT-LLA), which consisted of 2,532 patients with Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol, there was a 23% reduction in the total number of cardiac events in those who used Lipitor. The study, previewed for five years, was ended early when data showed that, generally, patients were experiencing a 36% reduction of a combined end point of nonfatal heart attacks and coronary heart disease (CHD), as well as a 27% reduction in the risk of stroke. A followup after three years showed that low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C) was 40 mg/dL lower in the Lipitor group than in the placebo group.

"These results can be important for patients with diabetes who are at significantly greater risk of cardiovascular disease and death than the general population," said Peter S. Sever, professor of clinical pharmacology and therapeutics at the Imperial College in

London, U.K. and the principal investigator for the study.

The Aggressive Lipid-Lowering Initiation Abates New Cardiac Events (ALLIANCE) trial also showed positive results with Lipitor. The four-year study of 2,442 patients with a history of CHD showed a 17% reduction in negative cardiac events, such as cardiac death, heart attacks, stroke, and unstable angina, compared to patients who were treated with usual care. Approximately 72% of those who used Lipitor reached their recommended level of LDL-C compared to 40% in patients who were treated with usual care.

Guidelines issued by the National Cholesterol Education Program and the Canadian Working Group on Hypercholesterolemia and Dyslipidemias encourage physicians to treat high cholesterol.

Three-year Subgroup Analysis Shows Pfizer's Lipitor® Reduced Total Cardiovascular Events in Patients with Type 2 Diabetes. New Orleans (Louisiana, USA). March 10, 2004.

Significant Reduction in Heart Attacks Shown in Patients taking Pfizer's Lipitor®. New Orleans (Louisiana, USA). March 11, 2004.

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## Ezetimibe plus simvastatin reduces LDL-C better, studies reveal

Phase III clinical trials conducted in support of VYTORIN™ (ezetimibe/simvastatin), an investigational medicine, have revealed that patients who used ezetimibe with simvastatin experienced a greater reduction in low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C) across the dosing ranges compared to those using Lipitor® (atorvastatin) or Zocor® (simvastatin) alone. Ezetimibe and simvastatin inhibit two sources of cholesterol by hindering cholesterol production in the liver and cholesterol absorption in the intestine.

The 24-week study involved 788 patients either using ezetimibe (10 mg) with simvastatin (from 10 mg to 80 mg) or atorvastatin monotherapy (from 10 mg to

80 mg). LDL-C reductions were significantly greater in patients using the combination.

After six weeks, patients using ezetimibe (10 mg) with simvastatin (10 mg) experienced a 46% LDL-C reduction compared to a 37% reduction with atorvastatin (10 mg). Another study showed a better reduction compared to Zocor as well.

The investigative medicine was well tolerated, with a safety profile similar to that of atorvastatin alone and simvastatin alone.

Ezetimibe with Simvastatin Provided Significantly Greater Reductions in LDL Cholesterol Compared to Lipitor® and Zocor® Across Dosing Ranges, New Studies Show. New Orleans (Louisiana, USA). March 8, 2004.

## A world first in the prevention of aneurysm recurrence

Preliminary results of a study conducted by researchers at CHUM-Notre-Dame Hospital showed that almost 90% of patients with aneurysms can be treated with radioactive coils after endovascular treatment in order to prevent aneurysm recurrence.

Endovascular treatment with radioactive coils was administered for the first time ever in Montreal to a group of 41 patients. The technique involves small quantities of radioactive phosphorus inserted on the surface of platinum coils generally used for endovascular treatment.

So far, preclinical experimental models show that only radioactive coils have been able to prevent

recanalization after coil embolization. Results from a previous study show a 22.6% reduction in the risk of dependency or death in patients with ruptured aneurysms in those treated with coils compared to surgery, which, although more invasive, has a 20% higher risk in aneurysm recurrence.

When efficacy is proven, endovascular treatment with coils will be administered more often to patients with brain aneurysms. In North America, an estimated 32,000 people have brain aneurysms. *PCard*

A World First for CHUM: Endovascular Treatment With Radioactive Coils to Reduce Aneurysm Recurrence. Montreal, Quebec. February 25, 2004.