Low Vitamin D Linked to Reduced Response to a Statin in People With HIV

HIV-positive individuals with deficient levels of the vitamin saw less of a reduction in cholesterol while taking Crestor in a recent trial.

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People with HIV who have deficient levels of vitamin D may need supplementation of the vitamin to better reap the benefits of cholesterol-lowering statins, aidsmap reports. In a recent trial, HIV-positive individuals with low vitamin D saw less of a drop in cholesterol than those with sufficient levels of the vitamin.

Publishing their findings in the Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes, researchers in the SATURN-HIV study evenly randomized 147 people with HIV to receive either 10 milligrams of Crestor (rosuvastatin) or a placebo for 96 weeks.

According to standard statin-use guidelines, these individuals were not candidates for a statin; they were at low risk for cardiovascular disease according to their Framingham score, which was an average of 5. Their LDL and HDL cholesterol levels were within the normal range.

Research suggests that people with HIV who would not normally be candidates for statins may stand to benefit from them. In theory, statins may help reduce some of the harmful effects that even well-treated HIV can have on the body. For example, statins may reduce harmful inflammation that could be a driver of the high rates of cardiovascular disease among the HIV population.

At the study's outset, 53 percent of the participants had deficient vitamin D and 13 percent had severely deficient levels.

The researchers found that among the participants who received Crestor, those who did not have deficient vitamin D levels experienced greater drops in LDL cholesterol than those with deficient levels of the vitamin. Additionally, the scientists found an association between adequate levels of vitamin D and reductions in indicators of immune activation and inflammation.

To read the aidsmap article, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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