CoQ10/Statin Combination Improves Atherosclerosis Treatment

Russian researchers investigated the effects of combining the statin drug, simvastatin (Zocor®) with supplemental coenzyme Q10 for the treatment of coronary atherosclerosis.* Forty-four patients with coronary atherosclerosis were prescribed daily doses of 90 mg CoQ10 plus 10 mg simvastatin for three months. More than half of the patients had already undergone coronary bypass surgery, while others had undergone coronary angioplasty to improve blood flow to the heart. Other patients' atherosclerosis was diagnosed with coronary angiography.

Beneficial high-density lipoprotein (HDL) increased by 23%, while the “index of atherogenicity” decreased by 27%. CoQ10 treatment reportedly reduced the tendency of platelets to aggregate, while reducing peroxidation of lipids by 30%. Lipid peroxidation is believed to play an important role in the development of atherosclerosis. This effect demonstrated a “potentially independent role of coenzyme Q10 in positive modification of oxidative stress,” investigators concluded.

—Dale Kiefer


Green Tea May Prevent Advanced Prostate Cancer

The incidence of prostate cancer is much lower in Asia than in the West, and a new Japanese study links higher consumption of green tea with a lower incidence of advanced prostate cancer.* Nearly 50,000 men were followed for more than a decade, and information regarding their green tea-drinking habits was compared with the incidence of prostate cancer.

Although localized, or non-disseminated prostate cancer, was not statistically related to green tea consumption, tea consumption was associated with a decrease in the risk of advanced prostate cancer, in a dose-dependent fashion. Advanced prostate cancer refers to cancer that has spread beyond the confines of the gland, a step that often leads to spread of the disease to lymph nodes and other organs. Men with the highest intake of green tea—five or more cups per day—enjoyed the greatest risk reduction, compared with men who drank one cup per day or less.

—Dale Kiefer


High C-Reactive Protein Levels Associated with Macular Degeneration

High blood levels of C-reactive protein (CRP), a marker of inflammation, are associated with an increased risk of developing macular degeneration, a common cause of vision loss, according to researchers in the Netherlands.* Investigators measured CRP blood levels in approximately 5,000 participants of the Rotterdam Study. Those with higher levels of CRP were more likely to develop macular degeneration during nearly eight years of follow-up, and the authors believe that lowering CRP levels could potentially decrease the risk.

"Evidence is accumulating that inflammatory and immune-associated pathways have a role in other degenerative diseases associated with advancing age, such as atherosclerosis and Alzheimer's disease," the authors wrote. "Smoking and high body mass index increase C-reactive protein levels. Moderate alcohol intake, diets with a low glycemic index and statin and multivitamin use reduce C-reactive protein levels."

—Marc Ellman, MD
