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## **Cardiovascular News Update**

Dear Colleague,

Westside Medical Associates of Los Angeles (WMALA) in conjunction with Westside Medical Imaging (WMI) would like to provide you with this weekly update on important new developments in cardiovascular care.

### **Medicare will continue to cover cardiac CT scans.**

Medicare beneficiaries can continue to have the access they deserve to an advanced, non-invasive clinical tool that has been clinically proven to be effective in diagnosing coronary artery disease. Westside Medical Imaging (WMI) has been a pioneer in cardiac CT imaging as the 3<sup>rd</sup> site in the United States to incorporate this technology into clinical practice. According to Dr. Norman Lepor, co-director of cardiovascular imaging, "this technology has the ability to diagnose the cause of chronic and acute chest pain syndromes and may be able to replace patients having to be sent by their physicians to the Emergency Room for soft rule outs where they may spend many hours waiting and leave with huge bills for services rendered". It is also useful technology in screening patients with risk factors for coronary artery disease. Dr. Hooman Madyoon, co-director of cardiovascular imaging also reminds practitioners that "men over 45 years of age and women over 55 years of age with any cardiovascular risk factors should be screened for coronary artery disease with either 64 slice coronary CT, coronary calcium scoring or carotid IMT, all of which are available at WMI.

### **Key points regarding women and coronary disease:**

1. The prevalence of hyperlipidemia is higher among women compared with men after the age of 65. Statin therapy appears to reduce risk of coronary heart disease to a similar degree in both men and women.
2. Estrogens have potential cardioprotective effects, including raising high-density lipoprotein cholesterol, lowering low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, inhibiting smooth muscle proliferation, and enhancing nitric oxide production; however, estrogens also have effects that may promote IHD, including increasing triglycerides and inflammation.

Early detection saves lives. That's what we do. Find out more at Westside Medical Imaging's website at [www.westsidemedimaging.com](http://www.westsidemedimaging.com)

Current recommendations state that estrogens are contraindicated for primary and secondary prevention.

3. Women have higher rates of false-positive results for exercise electrocardiograms. Improved diagnostic accuracy is provided by the addition of imaging (echo or SPECT) and the Duke treadmill score. Diagnostic testing such as cardiac CT and stress testing is best used in women at intermediate to high pretest probability for IHD. This includes women  $\geq 50$  years old with either typical or atypical symptoms, or women with symptoms together with diabetes or multiple risk factors.

4. Women with acute coronary syndromes (ACS) present with atypical symptoms more often than men. Although women are often treated less aggressively than men, current guidelines suggest similar management is indicated for both women and men ACS patients

### Overweight, obese women improve quality of life with as little as 10 to 30 minutes of exercise

Sedentary, overweight or obese women can improve their quality of life by exercising as little as 10 to 30 minutes a day, researchers reported at the American Heart Association's Conference on Nutrition, Physical Activity and Metabolism.

The Dose Response to Exercise in postmenopausal Women (DREW) study, first reported in 2007, was the largest randomized, controlled trial examining the role of exercise in postmenopausal women. These secondary results focus on quality of life among 430 women divided into four groups: three groups exercising at various levels and one control group that did not exercise.

"While the women who participated in the highest exercise group saw the greatest improvements in most quality of life scales, the women in the lowest exercise group also saw improvements," said Angela Thompson, M.S.P.H., co-author of the study and research associate at Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge, La. The public health message is tremendous, because it provides further support for the notion that even if someone cannot exercise an hour or more daily, getting out and exercising 10 to 30 minutes per day is beneficial, too.

### Study suggests low-fat diet may be better for heart health than low-carbohydrate diet.

While the two kinds of diets each led to weight loss, a low-fat approach appeared better for future cardiovascular health than a low-carbohydrate regimen, according to a study published in the February issue of Hypertension. David Gutterman, M.D., of the Medical College of Wisconsin found that, in a four-week randomized study, there were significant improvements in both weight and blood pressure. However, volunteers on the low-fat diet had improved flow-mediated dilation in the brachial artery, while those on the low-carbohydrate, high-fat regimen -- the so-called Atkins diet -- saw that measure worsen slightly. Therefore, composition of diet may be as important as the degree of weight loss in determining the effect of dietary interventions on vascular health.

## Ibuprofen may cancel antiplatelet benefit of aspirin, study suggests.

According to a study published in the March issue of the Journal of Clinical Pharmacology, for secondary stroke prophylaxis, ibuprofen nearly cancels out the antiplatelet benefit of aspirin. Francis Gengo, PharmD, of the University of Buffalo, and colleagues found that the combination markedly reduces aspirin's antiplatelet effect to the point that patients taking both may have essentially normal platelet aggregation for up to 20 hours a day. This negative effect of non-selective non steroidal anti-inflammatory agents on the antiplatelet effect of aspirin creating aspirin resistance, may predispose to recurrent coronary and carotid vascular event rates. It is important that we limit use of NSAID's in patients with chronic cardiovascular disease.

Westside Medical Associates of Los Angeles (WMALA) and Westside Medical Imaging (WMI) are premier centers in cardiac diagnosis and treatment.

Please feel free to contact  
Norman Lepor MD, Hooman Madyoon MD or Ivor Geft MD  
at (310) 289-9955  
or check our website at [www.westsidemedimaging.com](http://www.westsidemedimaging.com).

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