

When to Stop Statins

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Most of the GPs are giving a very low dose of atorvastatin which is the best statin recommended but the dose is 20 mg irrespective of cholesterol levels. However in acute coronary emergencies the cardiologists often give 40 mg tablets. After an attack of myocardial infarction, patients should be given 40 mg Atorvastatin life time. Nowadays in metabolic syndrome as much as 80 mg of atorvastatin is recommended all over the

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world.

The criteria to stop statins have been again defined i.e.

1. If CPK rises to more than 10 times, the drug has to be stopped.
2. If it is between 5-10 times then the patient can be observed.

Similarly if SGPT rises to more than 3 times, statins have to be stopped (otherwise to be observed).

Needless to say that in some patients appearance of pelvic myopathy calls for stopping statins irrespective of CPK levels.

VACCINATION AGAINST HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE : A NEW STRATEGY

In today's Lancet, Alain Tissot and colleagues' report a new strategy to treat hypertension. In patients with mild-to-moderate hypertension, these investigators used active immunization against angiotensin II with a vaccine in which the endogenous peptide is linked to a virus-like particle. This study is the first to show that vaccination against a vasoactive endogenous substance can reduce blood pressure in human beings.

Inhibition of the RAAS in conjunction with salt and volume depletion can cause life-threatening hyperkalaemia and renal shut-down.

Another important safety issue is whether repeated stimulation of the immune system by booster doses of an endogenous peptide linked to a virus-like particle can cause autoimmune disease.

If vaccination against high blood pressure were safe and effective in the long run, it might solve many problems of non-compliance.

Ola Samuelsson, Hans Herlitz, The Lancet, 2008; 371 : 788-89.