

Spotlight Series – Heart Smart
9/16/20
Q&A

I had a pericardial effusion that was found due to low bp symptoms. Had all the tests, echo, stress test etc that is all good. My bad cholesterol is high so went on a statin. Don't want to continue statin so started plant based diet. Have you seen success with plant based and improvement in numbers so I can go off statin?

-Ann

It can happen, but cholesterol is part diet and part genetic so you may only be able to lower your LDL so much with diet.

What about other heart drugs, related to aspirin, like Plavex, Brilinta, etc?

-Curt

If you are on one of these, you probably don't need aspirin as well. But check with your heart doctor!

I currently have Afib and take eliquis 2 times daily and Metoprolol daily. Should I take baby aspirin?

-Tom

Better ask your doctor but typically no.

Is easy bruising a cause for not taking aspirin?

-Jill

Yes...it could be, ask your doctor.

How does anemia affect A1C, and is there another measure of glucose control for folks with chronic anemia?

-Jill

Anemia will artificially lower your A1c to make it inaccurate. Jill a CGM (like Freestyle Libre) will give you an even better idea of your blood glucose control compared to the A1c. I would like to see the focus get OFF of A1c, and ON to TIME IN RANGE. One can have tons of highs and equal lows that come out to a lovely A1c.

When are the Dr.'s and insurance companies going to switch over to Time In Range?

-Nancy

Agree TIR is more important - hard to change old habits.

What if your systolic is high but the diastolic is 60?

-Anonymous Attendee

Both numbers matter, but if the systolic is high it's still hard on the heart (the systolic is the part of the heart beat when the heart is pushing blood out).

BP: Have been treated for BP for a number of years, on lisinopril 20 and HCTZ 25 QD. I exercise regularly. My BP on average is 135/70 taken about 4 times a week at the same time. Do I need to make adjustments?

-Jim

Those numbers look good to me.

Have heard that studies showed ace inhibitors have shown not to help with kidney but rather beneficial for eyes. I took lisinopril for 25 yrs then had low bp symptoms so went off it. Is this legit?

-Ann

What the heck are you reading? ACE are protective of the kidneys for sure.

I agree with Steve, Ann. The evidence is very good for ACE inhibitors being good for the kidneys.

Cholesterol: What about LDL particle size. This lab is not always covered by insurance. Is it a useful measure to pay out of pocket?

-Jim

It can add a little more information in some cases, but you (or your doctor) have to know how to interpret it.

Do you guys have any information about Metformin having ingredients that might cause Cancer?

-Vincent

In general metformin reduces some types of cancer, but the recent generic batches supposedly have issues and were pulled from the market.

Yes, there are negative things written about the dangers of taking statins. I've taken them for years and have greatly reduced my cholesterol. They do cause some muscle aches, but I think it's something you get used to. Do you think it's smart to continue the statins even with good cholesterol because of being a 54 year old diabetic fame?

-Alice

YES YES YES. Statins save lives.

My endo suggested taking CoQ10 while on a statin. I am doing that but wonder if this is standard practice.

-Jim

There's not as much evidence for this, but some physicians recommend it.

I am taking Trulicity, Invokana, and lisinopril. Can taking all three be too much of a good thing for taking care of my heart?

-Christina

Good question, but used together is doubly beneficial for the heart!

Any news if stronger Trulicity is coming? I am taking maximum dose currently.

-Bill

Just approved, but may not be at the pharmacy yet. 3 and 4.5 mg doses!

Speak about placement of Dexcom's sensor. Better on arm than ribcage.

-Anonymous Attendee

Actually you can put it anywhere you want!

My bp is higher when I wake up (130+/80+) but then lowers later in the morning. Is this related to the dawn affect? Why is it higher when I wake up?

-Doug

For some folks they experience the same thing. It may be related to dawn. Your doc may need to adjust your meds..let him or her know.

Hi Doug! You can try taking your BP meds at night (or if you are on multiple, I can't remember, split them so some in the morning and some at night) to see if this helps keep things more even.

I am on Trulicity. Would taking Glyxambi (combination medication of Tradjenta, a DPP-4 inhibitor & Jardiance a SGLT-2 inhibitor) in addition to Trulicity cause a possible duplicate therapy with a GLP-1 RA (e.g., Trulicity) and DPP-4 inhibitor (e.g., Tradjenta in Glyxambi)?

-Michelle H.

Since you should not take a DPP4 with a GLP1, those two should not be taken together but a combo Met plus SGLT2 plus Trulicity would be fine with your docs advice.

Was reading about metformin and cancer, so you don't think any recent pills I've gotten are the harmful ones?

-Alice

Pharmacies have removed those brands...no worries.

**Due to reduced Dr/ patient visits, how frequent should we have our heart checked?
Telehealth calls are good, but this is not available.**

-Galaxy A10e

Your heart health risk factors should be addressed twice a year, and a lot can be done over the phone.

Is there a lower limit of ANY kind of fat? My sister is trying to avoid all fat, even if is monounsaturated. Is this necessary to reduce heart disease?

-Cee

No, most of us need some fats. Just keep them the healthy kind!

It used to be a limit of 35carbs per meal for weight loss, what is recommended these days with a low carb emphasis?

-Galaxy A10e

I believe Jennifer just said 30%.

Can metformin harm one's kidneys?

-Elinor

NO, it does not harm the kidney. But it is filtered through the kidney, so for people with underlying kidney disease, the dose of metformin may have to be decreased (or stopped).

Do intense charlie horses count as muscle aches?

-Jill

Maybe. Sometimes these are related to statins too. You can try another statin (some people have issues with one but not the other), vs a lower dose, or try adding the CoQ-10.

When you get hypoglycemia, does that stress your heart?

-Darren

Hi Darren, I was hoping to mention this but ran out of time. Yes, hypoglycemia is very stressful to the heart. In severe cases it can even cause arrhythmias or heart attacks.

Please talk about hs-C reactive protein for testing inflammation

-Barbara

This part of the 'advanced' heart panel. If Hs-CRP is elevated it can suggest increased inflammation, and thus increased risk for heart disease.

Can you comment on the fact that there is a connection between statins and lower limb cramping. I literally need to jump out of bed to relieve my pain. Any suggestions?

-Daniel

Yes that can happen unfortunately. Sometimes other statins don't cause that problem, so it may be worth trying a different version, or a lower dose! CoQ-10 could help too.

So if I was on lisiniprol for 30,yrs no kidney issues and bp is low. I stopped it... should I restart or ok to leave out? Irl is a personal friend and I reached out to him.

-Ann

if your BP was low, you may not be able to be on it anyway!