



August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007

## **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.

### **Multidetector CT angiography may accurately diagnose intracranial aneurysms.**

"Multidetector CT angiography can diagnose and assess intracranial aneurysms with equivalent accuracy to digital subtraction angiography (DSA)," according to an article in the August issue of *Radiology*. "Compared with DSA, the investigators found that multidetector CTA had a sensitivity of 98 percent and a specificity of 100 percent for detecting brain aneurysms." And, "multidetector CTA predicted the feasibility of endovascular treatment with 94 percent sensitivity and 92 percent specificity." Karsten Papke, M.D., of the Duisburg Clinic, and colleagues said, "We conclude that multidetector CT angiography...can be used as the first step in the diagnostic workup of patients with subarachnoid hemorrhage." MedPage adds, "If multidetector CTA identifies a ruptured aneurysm, a diagnostic DSA can be avoided. However, if multidetector CTA imaging is negative, DSA remains necessary to rule out an aneurysm that might have been missed by CT," the researchers noted. **64-slice multidetector neuro imaging is available at Westside Medical Imaging**

**Researchers say U.S. adults should reduce salt intake.** UPI (8/1) reports, "Reducing salt in the diet is always a good idea because too much salt results in hypertension," according to U.S. researchers. UPI continues, "Ninety percent of U.S. adults will develop hypertension unless they take steps to prevent it, but a study earlier this year found that people who cut back on the amount of salt in their diets by 25 percent to 35 percent could reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease by as much as 25 percent and lower their mortality rates by 20 percent, according to Amy Schnabel, a clinical nutrition manager at the University of California at Los Angeles Medical Center." In a statement, Schnabel said, "The biggest misconception about sodium intake is that many people think that, by removing the salt shaker from the dinner table, they aren't eating salt, but some 80 percent of dietary sodium comes from eating out and from packaged and processed foods." UPI notes that the "average U.S. adult consumes 4,000 to 6,000 milligrams of salt per day," although the FDA's recommended allowance is only 2,400 mg per day.

**Enteric coating on aspirin may not prevent adverse effects.** UPI (7/31) reported, "Enteric-coated aspirin has virtually the same effect on the stomach as plain, uncoated aspirin," according to the Harvard Heart Letter. UPI continued, "Putting an enteric coating on aspirin was an attempt by the pharmaceutical companies to prevent the sometimes adverse effects of aspirin -- ranging from low-grade pain to bleeding -- on the gastrointestinal tract that affects some people but does not seem to affect others." The newsletter "explains that aspirin doesn't have to be in contact with stomach cells to harm them." The report says that "even when the pill dissolves in the intestines,

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the medicine gets into the bloodstream and is carried to all parts of the body -- including the cells lining the stomach."

**Federal advisory panel says Avandia should remain on the market.** The AP (7/31, Bridges) reports, "The widely used diabetes drug Avandia (rosiglitazone) should remain on the market, government health advisers overwhelmingly recommended Monday, saying evidence of an increased risk of heart attack doesn't merit removal." The "recommendation to the Food and Drug Administration came on a 22-1 vote by the panel." But, "in an earlier 20-3 vote, the panelists said that available data show the drug does increase heart risks." The panelists also "said the drug's label should include a so-called 'black-box' warning...to flag that risk. Some suggested the label caution against using the drug together with insulin because doing so may elevate heart risks. That joint use is currently FDA-approved. The experts also asked that the drug be studied further (Maugh II), the New York Times (7/31, Harris), the Wall Street Journal (7/31, A2, Mathews, subscription required), the Washington Times (7/31, Lopes), USA Today (7/31, Rubin), and ABC World News (7/30, story 2, 2:35, Gibson) also cover the story.

**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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