



November 14, 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.

**Micro T Wave Alternans Test available at Westside Medical Associates Los Angeles (WMALA) office of Drs. Lepor and Madyoon helps determine which patients should receive defibrillators.** "A simple test can give cardiologists guidance about whether they should implant defibrillators into patients with weak hearts," according to research reported in the Nov. 6 issue of the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*. According to the researchers, patients "who had abnormal test results were [at least] four times more likely to suffer abnormal heart rhythms or die within 18 to 24 months of the test." However, patients "who received normal scores on the test had 'a very good prognosis and [were] likely to benefit little' from having defibrillators implanted," wrote the authors. Dr. Chan noted, "There's growing evidence that this test may help determine" which patients "may be the best candidates to receive -- or not receive -- a defibrillator." Please feel free to contact WMALA physicians at (310) 289-9955 regarding Micro T Wave Alternans testing.

**Preeclampsia may double women's risk of heart disease.** "Preeclampsia doubles a woman's risk of later heart disease -- perhaps over and above the risk from other factors that contribute to heart disease," Women who had suffered from the condition were "2.16 times more likely to have heart disease within 11.7 years," as well as "3.7 times more likely to have high blood pressure within 14 years." The researchers also found that women who had preeclampsia were "1.49 times more likely to die within 14.5 years." According to the study authors, these "findings suggest that preeclampsia and cardiovascular diseases may share a common origin."

**Research suggests marital stress may be linked to atherosclerosis.** When married couples lose their cool with one another, it may take a toll on their hearts," Researchers followed "150 healthy married couples between 60 and 70 years of age" who "were videotaped while discussing a sensitive subject in their marriage, such as money, children, vacations, or household duties." Two days later, participants "had CT scans yielding a score for each person indicating the amount of plaque build-up in the arteries that supply the heart." The researchers found that while "wives who were hostile in disagreements with their spouses were more likely to have atherosclerosis," the condition "was more common" in husbands "when either they or their wives acted in a controlling manner."

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**Research suggests carotid stents may be safe, improve blood flow to brain.**

Carotid stents offer doctors a safe way to improve blood flow to the brain and prevent strokes, studies show." Some physicians said that the devices "may offer a treatment that's as effective as surgery and not as invasive for a broader group of patients.

**Research suggests napping may have cardiovascular benefits.** Evidence is mounting that a short, afternoon nap, for an otherwise well-rested, healthy person, is good for the heart. "After sleeping for four hours the night before," participants in the clinical trial were "checked for blood pressure under three conditions." During the first two sessions, "the volunteers relaxed, one time standing and once lying down, but didn't sleep." During "the third session, the subjects fell asleep for no more than an hour." Greg Atkinson, chronobiologist with the Research Institute for Sport and Exercise Sciences at Liverpool John Moores University, and researchers "found a significant drop in blood pressure when the volunteers slept, but not when they merely relaxed."

**For most women and their physicians, heart disease not "on the radar"** With the possible exception of those at highest risk -- diabetics who smoke and are obese, for example -- most women simply don't have heart disease on the radar." However, almost "1 in 2 will develop it in her lifetime, and 1 in 3 will die from it." Physicians "are particularly interested in identifying and preventing disaster in the vast group of women who are at intermediate risk...and are most likely unaware of the consequences," as "it's in this group that fully 70 percent of heart attacks occur." U.S. News noted that, although "most women having a heart attack will experience the hallmark chest pressure, some have symptoms uncommon in men." According to Lori Mosca, director of preventive cardiology at New York-Presbyterian Hospital and chair of the committee that developed the most recent American Heart Association guidelines for prevention in women, "Two thirds of women who die of heart disease have unrecognized symptoms." **This would support the recent SHAPE guidelines recommending that women over the age of 50 years or greater with one or more conventional risk factors undergo coronary screening. 64 slice CT coronary angiography and coronary calcium scores can directly assesses the coronary arteries directly with assessments of carotid artery intimal-medial thickness offering a surrogate measure of cardiac risk.**

**Westside Medical Associates of Los Angeles (WMALA) is a premier center for cardiac diagnostics and therapeutics. Westside Medical Imaging (WMI) is a premier center for cardiac, vascular and body imaging.**

Please feel free to contact  
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