

ESC Criticizes Dangerous Disinformation Campaign on Statins

Sophia Antipolis, 30 November 2017. The European Society Cardiology (ESC) denounces the recent re-broadcast of a misinformed television programme questioning the relationship between blood cholesterol levels and cardiovascular disease. The programme was aired on the joint Franco-German public television network ARTE.

The programme encouraged physicians and patients to halt lipid-lowering treatments, including statins, and suggests that recommendations issued by scientific societies such as the ESC are inappropriate.

“This broadcast is dangerously irresponsible,” said Fausto Pinto, immediate past president of the ESC. “After antibiotics, statins may have contributed more to prolonging life expectancy than any other type of medication.”

“The most serious consequence of this kind of disinformation campaign is that people will be harmed. We have clear evidence that when patients with heart disease stop taking their statins it significantly increases the number of cardiac events they are likely to suffer,” said Prof. Pinto. “In other words, many people will die, unfortunately, because they listened to the statin naysayers.”

The ESC would like to emphasize the following points :

-- Studies involving thousands of patients demonstrate that the use of statins dramatically reduces the risk of "major vascular events", including death from heart attack and stroke. The use of a statin administered for five years to 10,000 people with known vascular disease would prevent major vascular events in 1,000 patients. And this benefit increases for every year the medication is taken.

-- In view of the overwhelming evidence, the world’s major cardiovascular societies, including American, Canadian, European and Asian, have expressed a clear position in support of statins in their respective clinical practice guidelines, with specific recommendations on the need to deal with this major public health problem effectively.

To prevent this widespread disinformation and protect patients, the ESC remains at the disposal of media organisations wishing balanced, fact-based and scientifically founded opinion. We are available for any questions from the press or public in relation to cardiovascular disease.

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ESC Press Office

Tel: +33 (0)4 89 87 24 83

Email: press@escardio.org

[About the European Society of Cardiology](#)

The European Society of Cardiology brings together health care professionals from more than 140 countries, working to advance cardiovascular medicine and help people lead longer, healthier lives.