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Risk of macular degeneration in users of statins: cross sectional study

Nigel F Hall, Catharine R Gale, Holly Syddall, David I W Phillips, Christopher N Martyn

Atherosclerosis and abnormalities of lipid metabolism are associated with an increased risk of age related macular degeneration—the Western world's main cause of blindness.\(^1\) Statins (hydroxymethyl glutaryl coenzyme A reductase inhibitors) modify patients’ lipid profile and lower their risk of coronary heart disease.\(^2\) They also prevent stroke and, possibly, Alzheimer's disease. We report here an association between statin use and lower risk of age related macular degeneration.

Participants, methods, and results

We wrote to 660 men and women aged 66-75 who had been traced by the Office for National Statistics using information from their birth record at the Jessop Hospital for Women, Sheffield. Of these, 412 (62%) agreed to take part and were interviewed at home. We recorded their use of drugs, including statins, currently and in the previous five years, and their history of cardiovascular disease. The participants were invited to...
Anntenatal detection of HIV: national surveillance and unlinked anonymous survey

Susan Cliffe, Pat A Tookey, Angus Nicoll

In 1999 national targets were adopted for the universal offer and recommendation of a test for HIV during antenatal care throughout England.1 This built on earlier initiatives aimed at enhancing maternal diagnosis of HIV infection and reducing perinatal transmission of HIV with appropriate interventions.2 Substantial improvement in the proportion of maternal HIV infections diagnosed has been reported for much of London, and improvement has been observed more recently for the rest of England.3 We used published estimates of rates of vertical transmission of HIV in the United Kingdom to assess whether the target of an 80% reduction in the proportion of vertically infected infants by December 2002 is likely to be achieved.4

Participants, methods, and results

We used results from the unlinked anonymous dried blood spot survey to estimate the number of births in...