

Current Cholesterol Guidelines and Clinical Reality: A Comparison of Coronary Artery Disease Patients From Now and From Seven Years Ago

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Alexander Vonbank^{1,2}, Christoph H. Saely^{1,2}, Stefan Beer^{1,2}, Philipp Rein^{1,2}, Heinz Drexel^{1,2}

¹Private University of the Principality of Liechtenstein, Triesen, Liechtenstein;

²Academic Teaching Hospital Feldkirch, Feldkirch, Austria; vivit@lkhf.at

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INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND (MAIN TITLE)

Current guidelines recommend serum LDL cholesterol <100 mg/dl for patients with coronary artery disease (CAD) and <70 mg/dl for the very high risk patients with CAD plus type 2 diabetes (T2DM).

MATERIAL & METHODS

We obtained lipid panels in two cohort of patients who were referred to coronary angiography for the evaluation of previously (>1 month) established CAD in 1999-2000 (n = 349) and in 2005-2007 (n = 656), respectively.

RESULTS

The prevalence of diabetes was 24.9% in the first and 26.9% in the second cohort. Overall, 59.3% and 64.6% of diabetic patients (p = 0.408) and 50.8% and 58.5% of non-diabetic patients (p = 0.043) were on statins in the first and in the second cohort, respectively. Among non-diabetic patients with CAD, the proportion of subjects with LDL cholesterol <100 mg was 23.5% in the first cohort and 28.9% in the second cohort (p = 0.182); among patients with CAD plus T2DM 36.0% and 40.6% (p = 0.481) and 8.1% and 9.1% (p = 0.788) had LDL cholesterol <100mg/dl and <70 mg/dl in the first and second cohorts, respectively.

CONCLUSIONS & OUTLOOK

The proportion of CAD patients meeting current lipid treatment goals is low and has only marginally improved during the last 7 years. This in particular holds true for the very high risk patients with CAD plus diabetes. Targeted programs to improve the lipid management of CAD patients in current clinical practice are necessary.