

Re: Lawsuit questions need for Lipitor

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.med.cardiology/2005-10/msg00294.html>

- *From:* "fresh~horses" <fresh-horses@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 9 Oct 2005 10:36:54 -0700
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Susan wrote:

> x-no-archive: yes

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> <http://www.newsday.com/news/health/ny-hschol094462431oct09.0.695754.print.story>

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> Susan

Thanks for this Susan. The excellent Roni Rabin has been working on this issue for some time. Here's her first:

'We've been bamboozled' about cholesterol risks

Roni Rabin

Newsday.com

July 6, 2004

{ archived on Healthy Skepticism }

<http://healthyskepticism.org/publications/nonmedline/2004/0706.htm>

If you're a woman like me who worries about your blood cholesterol level, there's something you should know.

Buried in the back pages of a leading medical journal recently was a study that raised serious questions about whether cholesterol-lowering drugs are useful for women who are otherwise healthy.

The study didn't get a lot of media attention. But its results were surprising – especially considering how many millions of women are taking drugs known as statins to lower their cholesterol. Women like me, who've had it drummed into us that heart disease is the leading cause of death we face. And who've been told repeatedly cholesterol is a major risk factor.

The paper, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, examined the results of 13 carefully selected clinical trials and teased out the effects on women. It wasn't easy: At least 80 percent of the participants were men.

The researchers found that for women who are taking statins as a preventative measure – they've never had cardiovascular disease but may

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be at risk – it wasn't clear the pills bestowed any benefit. That's because so few women in this group have heart attacks to begin with.

For women who have cardiovascular disease, the drugs reduced the risk of another heart incident – but did not reduce overall deaths.

"The risk for total mortality was not lower in women treated with lipid-lowering drugs, regardless of whether they had prior cardiovascular disease or not," Dr. Judith M.E. Walsh and Dr. Michael Pignone wrote.

Last year, scientists at the University of British Columbia's Therapeutics Initiative came to a similar conclusion about the use of statins in men who didn't have prior heart disease. Sure, they had fewer heart attacks – but they still died at the same rate. "What we're hypothesizing is that