

TRANSCRIPT

STATIN DRUGS & DIABETES: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Hello everyone, I'm Dr. David Perlmutter.

You don't want to become a type 2 diabetic if you can help it. That means you really need to pay attention to lifestyle choices like the foods you eat and how much exercise you get, because these things do play an established role in determining your risk for Type 2 diabetes.

From my perspective as a neurologist, the reason I'm really fixated on type 2 diabetes is because recent reports indicate that if you are a type 2 diabetic you may have an increased risk for Alzheimer's disease, a disease for which there is no treatment, by as much as 4x. So you know my mission here is to do everything I can to give you information about how you can reduce your risk of becoming a diabetic. Well, new research is demonstrating that one of the most commonly used classes of medications, which are the statin drugs that are used to lower cholesterol, are associated with a profoundly increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Let's take a let's take a look at some research.

This study is called *Increased risk of diabetes with Statin treatment*, and it is really quite compelling. This is a study that looked at individuals over a six year period of time, evaluated close to 9,000 men who did not have diabetes, and just over 2,000 of them were on statins. They were followed for about six years and they had an oral glucose tolerance test, where sugar is given orally and researchers see how high blood sugar goes and what the insulin response is. They had a test of average blood sugar called hemoglobin A1C, and diagnosis of diabetes was made if the A1C was 6.5 percent or greater. That's fairly standard. They also determined if a person, during that six year study, had to go on blood sugar-lowering medication. So these are the parameters that were used to determine the diagnosis of diabetes in any of these men, and the findings were really profound.

The folks that were taking statin medications had a 46% increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes. And, similarly as you would expect, their sensitivity to insulin decreased. So their bodies, their cells became less sensitive, less

responsive, to the hormone insulin by 24%, and actually the excretion of insulin declined by about 12%.

Those folks that were on statin medications had a fairly dramatically increased risk increasing over time. And if we look at a particular statin drug, like Simvastatin or Zocor, we see that it is really associated with a strongly increased risk for developing diabetes. Now here's what's really very interesting and I find it surprising: the folks that had the highest risk for developing diabetes when they were taking statins had the lowest blood sugar at the beginning of the study!

Again this was published in Diabetologia in 2015.

So again this study is very compelling, saying that there's no free ride when it comes to taking statin drugs. The increased risk, around 40%, of developing diabetes for taking a certain drug is seen in both men and in women. There are studies to that actually look at both populations. So prevention is the ultimate principle of wisdom here.

I think that when you are told by your doctor that you need a statin drug you might well need to take that drug. But I think it's really important to recognize what our most well-respected, peer-reviewed medical journals are telling us, in terms of risks that you may not be aware of, in this case of becoming a type 2 diabetic.

Thanks for joining me. I'm Dr. David Perlmutter.

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<http://www.drperlmutter.com/statin-drugs-diabetes-what-you-need-to-know/>