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Hypertriglyceridemia: Identifying and treating patients at risk for coronary artery disease

The U S Department of Health and Human Services Data Brief describing trends in elevated triglycerides among adults in the United States from 2001 to 2012, indicated that approximately one-quarter of adults over the age of 20 had elevated triglycerides. The percentage of those with elevated triglycerides greater than 150 mg/dl did decline from 2001 to 2102 from 33.3% from 2001-2004 to 25.1% during 2009 to 2012. However, hypertriglyceridemia remains a significant risk factor for coronary artery disease (CAD). Many of the risk factors for hypertriglyceridemia are preventable and are related to sedentary lifestyles, obesity, and cigarette smoking. Some of the primary causes for high triglycerides today are caused by high carbohydrate diets with added sugars, and fructose along with diets high in trans-fatty acids, and high alcohol consumption. Patients often do not understand that high triglycerides levels are correlated with increased risks of heart disease and pancreatitis when levels are close to or greater than 1,000 mg/dl. Chylomicronemia syndrome is also associated with triglyceride levels greater than 1,000 mg/dl, but is a less severe condition than pancreatitis. This condition is often unrecognized in primary care providers and generally resolves when triglyceride levels decrease. In addition, hypertriglyceridemia is associated with several genetic causes, which will be discussed. Furthermore, genetic variants along with environmental factors can predispose a patient with hypertriglyceridemia to CAD and heart attacks. This presentation will explore what is known in our current state of science related to hypertriglyceridemia and explore effective management treatments for patients seen in primary care practices.

Biography

Bruce Leonard is a Professor in the PhD program and a certified Family Nurse Practitioner at the University of Texas Medical Branch, School of Nursing, TX. Currently, his research focus involves using technology driven lifestyle monitoring devices for self-management that provide feedback to the healthcare provider for just-in-time coaching to improve long-term adherence to glycemic control among persons with type 2 diabetes and examining circadian rhythm clock gene expressions as physiological outcome measures. Other research areas of interest have included: Quality-of-life and self-management of chronic illness among persons with COPD, instrument development in examining nurse practitioner student self-efficacy or confidence to perform standardized patient exams, the application of team-based learning into online learning formats as an evidenced based flipped classroom learning format and the integration and identification of biomarkers, genomics, and epigenetics into self-management research for persons with chronic illnesses.

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Notes:

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