Duration of antiplatelet drugs for drug-eluting stents studied

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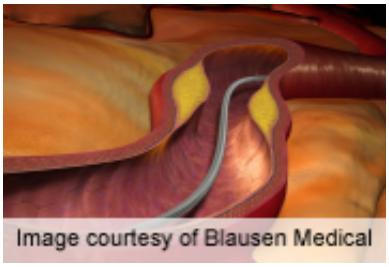

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(HealthDay)—In patients receiving drug-eluting stents, dual antiplatelet therapy can be safely discontinued during the first year, according to two studies published online Sept. 19 in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*.

In the first study, Ignacio Ferreira-González, M.D., Ph.D., from Vall d'Hebron Hospital in Barcelona, Spain, and colleagues conducted a study involving 1,622 patients undergoing drug-eluting stent implantation. The patients were assessed at regular intervals up to a year post-implantation. During that time, 10.6 percent interrupted at least one antiplatelet drug; 64.5 percent of the interruptions were temporary. The researchers found that the rate of major cardiac events was similar in patients who continued or interrupted treatment.

In the second study, Byeong-Keuk Kim, M.D., from the Yonsei University College of Medicine in Seoul, South Korea, and colleagues randomly assigned 2,117 patients with coronary artery stenosis to receive a zotarolimus-eluting stent with three months of dual antiplatelet therapy or another drug-eluting stent with twelve months of dual antiplatelet therapy. The researchers found that both groups had similar rates of a primary composite end point of cardiovascular death, myocardial infarction, stent thrombosis, target or vessel revascularization, or bleeding at one year (4.7 percent in each group).

"With newer-generation drug-eluting stents, six months [of] dual antiplatelet therapy might be sufficient, and three months not completely off-the-wall in low-risk groups," Bernhard Witzenbichler, M.D., from Charité-Campus Benjamin Franklin in Berlin, writes in an accompanying editorial. "However, the patient- and device-related criteria safely allowing early dual antiplatelet therapy withdrawal or interruption still have to be determined."

The Ferreira-González study was partially funded by Bristol-Myers Squibb; two authors disclosed financial ties to drug and device companies. Two authors from the Kim study disclosed financial ties to Medtronic.

More information: Abstract - Ferreira-González
Full Text
Abstract - Kim
Full Text
Editorial

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