

Experts defend new heart attack prevention advice

November 18 2013, by Marilyn Marchione

Heart experts who wrote new guidelines for preventing heart attacks and strokes are defending a formula that some doctors say overestimates risk for certain groups.

The American Heart Association experts say that any flaws in the formula are small and should not delay implementing the new advice, which greatly expands how many people should consider taking cholesterol-lowering statin drugs.

The Heart Association held a news briefing at its annual conference in Dallas to discuss the guidelines after a newspaper story featured criticism by several prominent cardiologists.

Even the critics say the guidelines are a big improvement. For the first time, they aim to prevent strokes as well as heart attacks and customize risk assessment for women versus men and blacks versus whites. Heart disease is the leading killer worldwide.

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