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High Statin Doses Do Not Impair Aerobic Activity or Skeletal Muscle Function in Older Adults, Says New Study

Phoenix, July 30 – A study in the current issue of the Journal of the American Aging Association shows that statin use in older adults does not negatively affect aerobic exercise or high-intensity weight training.

“This is excellent news,” said Dr. S. Mitchell Harman, director of the Kronos Longevity Research Institute and an author of the report. “Many older Americans are staying healthy longer by exercising and using statins to reduce their cholesterol levels. This research indicates that these drugs do not adversely affect a healthy exercise regimen.”

The study was conducted over a three-month period, observing 12 men and women ages 55-76 who had normal cholesterol levels and were not overweight. They also were not using any cholesterol-lowering medicines prior to the start of the study. The exercise testing was divided between two days, the first determining the test subjects’ levels of oxygen consumption, muscular strength and aerobic endurance. On day 2, they were subject to more muscular-strength testing, but also testing to measure muscular power and endurance. Creatine levels were measured in the test subjects as well.

Once the pre-testing was completed, each person was given 40 mg of statins for the first two weeks of the study, with the dosage increased to 80 mg for the remaining 10 weeks. As a safety precaution, liver enzymes and creatine levels were monitored for about a month.

Aerobic capacity was measured by having each test subject ride a stationary bike until either maximum oxygen intake was achieved or the subject was close to his or her maximum heart rate. Tests for strength were conducted by having a subject do chest presses (upper body) and leg presses (lower body). Each person performed as many repetitions as possible. The number of repetitions completed was used as a measure of muscular endurance. Prior to this study being conducted, persons taking statins often complained of weakness and muscle tenderness when taking statins while engaging in strenuous physical activity. Throughout the course of this study, however, none of the subjects had any issues or problems with the aforementioned ailments.

About the Kronos Longevity Research Institute (KLRI)

KLRI, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, is a leader in developing new modes of prevention and treatment to enhance human longevity. KLRI is the only independent research institute devoted exclusively to translating basic discoveries in the process of aging into useful tools, improved medical care and healthier lives. KLRI’s research is conducted by its own highly regarded scientists and through collaborations with some of the nation’s leading medical research centers. Because KLRI conducts pioneering research in an area of science that is poorly understood, KLRI offers the potential to make seminal contributions that benefit not only the growing population of older Americans, but people everywhere and generations to follow.

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