

Slocum-Dickson Medical Group Contributes to Landmark National Study

New Hartford - Slocum-Dickson Medical Group is proud to have been a participant in a recent landmark international clinical trial called the “JUPITER” trial. The results of this trial were recently published as the lead article in the November 20th issue of The New England Journal of Medicine under the title “Rosuvastatin to Prevent Vascular Events in Men and Women with Elevated C-Reactive Protein”.

The Clinical Research Department at Slocum Dickson was one of the top enrollers for this study. Daniel Goodman, MD served as the Principle Investigator at this site. Other on-site sub-investigators (assistants) were: Drs. Blatt, Breslow, Cimo, Hunsiker, Hunt, LaGrant, Le, John, O’Malley, Raj and Sloan. Overall, the study was under the direction of Dr. Paul Ridker from the Harvard Medical School. The Astra Zeneca Corporation funded the study but had no role in the scientific analysis.

This clinical research trial studied men over 50 and women over 60 who have what would be considered relatively normal levels of LDL cholesterol (commonly referred to as “bad cholesterol”) of 130 or less. In addition, each study participant had to have a modestly elevated level of C-reactive protein and have no previous history of heart disease or several other major diseases (“apparently healthy”). C reactive protein is a protein found in the blood that elevates when blood vessels are inflamed. 17,802 patients or subjects were enrolled into this trial at 1315 different study sites in 26 countries. Half of the subjects were given a placebo and the other half were given Rosuvastatin (brand name Crestor). A highly significant reduction in major cardiovascular events (i.e. heart attacks, strokes, or death from heart disease) was found in the subjects who received Rosuvastatin compared to those who received placebo. Side effects or “adverse events” in the patients who took Rosuvastatin were minimal and comparable to placebo. The significance of these findings are that more people can benefit from lowering of LDL cholesterol levels with a medicine such as Rosuvastatin. Even if the LDL level is already under 130, as it was in the subjects in this study, lowering it further was found to be beneficial to the patients. In addition, it suggests that the C reactive protein test may be of additional benefit in determining which patients are at risk for cardiovascular disease. Rosuvastatin is a member of a family of drugs commonly known as “the statins” which are used to lower cholesterol levels thereby preventing the build-up of harmful plaque which clogs patient’s arteries.

Clinical research investigates how new pharmaceuticals will work in patients and, as in the JUPITER trial, how existing drugs may be used in new or different circumstances than they are usually used. The Clinical Research Department at Slocum Dickson is responsible for the conduct of studies at its site, and has participated in over 70 clinical trials. Study activities include evaluating the well-being of study participants, laboratory evaluations, reports to sponsors and review boards, pill counts, and maintaining detailed records. In addition to the JUPITER study which has concluded, the research department has been involved in a wide variety of other studies, ranging from pediatric ear infections to Kidney Disease and more. Currently Slocum-Dickson is involved in studies related to Diabetes and Heart Disease.

Dr. Goodman, the Principle Investigator at Slocum Dickson states: “I would like to thank all the staff who worked hard on this project and I would especially like to thank our patients who participated in this important clinical research”