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You Need to Know About The 'NNT' of Your Drugs

Have you heard about the NNT of the drugs your doctor prescribes for you to take?

It is something EVERYONE needs to know about before you start taking whatever drug your doctor prescribes. When he hands you the prescription ask what the NNT is for it, and if he doesn't know wait in his office until he finds out!

'NNT' stands for 'Number Needed to Treat.' That is the number of people who need to take the drug for it to have a positive impact on ONE person. Yes, you read that right; it is the number of people who need to take the drug for it to have a positive impact on just ONE single person.

You would expect the NNT to be 'one' wouldn't you, or maybe, in the worst case to be as much as 'two'?

However with many of these 'wonder drugs' and even with the industry standard drugs that are prescribed to everyone as 'recommended' by the likes of the FDA and the medical regulators and colleges, this number is a lot higher than two!

For instance, of the two most common statins which according to Yale Medicine is either Crestor or Lipitor, Lipitor has the highest market

share. Lipitor is manufactured by Pfizer and according to Drug Watch it has the coveted status of being the world's top-selling prescription drug of all time and has achieved cumulative sales in excess of \$148 billion.

According to documents published in the National Library of Medicine the NNT for this statin is 28!!! This means that you need to give this drug to 28 people to prevent one cardiovascular event in five years. Great for that one person, but what are your chances of being one of the other 27 who suffer all the known side effects of this drug and still have the same risk of a heart attack that they had before taking the drug?

These side effects include swelling and inflammation in nasal passages and in the back of the throat; joint pain; diarrhea; pain in the arms or legs; urinary tract infection (UTI); upset stomach; nausea; muscle spasms; insomnia; muscle pain or weakness and sometimes the breakdown of muscle tissue; abnormal liver function and allergic reactions.

Not much fun, and all this for the one person in 28 to have a positive impact.

Before taking any prescription drug, always ask for its NNT number and its side-



effects. Then carefully consider if it is really worth it.

Sources for this article include:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK132268/table/cerguideguidance.t1/>
<https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/should-you-take-a-statin-for-high-cholesterol>
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