

NIH launches clinical trial focused on HIV-related CV disease

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Singapore: Researchers have begun enrolling participants in to a multicenter international clinical trial to test whether statin administration can reduce the risk for major adverse cardiovascular events, such as heart attacks, strokes, and heart disease, in people with HIV infection. The trial is supported by the National Institutes of Health's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).

Statins are a class of drugs that have been previously demonstrated to be safe and effective in lowering cholesterol levels as well as the risk of major adverse cardiovascular events in non-HIV populations.

Known as the Randomized Trial to Prevent Vascular Events in HIV, or REPRIEVE, the randomized clinical trial is the largest to date focused on HIV-related cardiovascular disease. Researchers hypothesize that statins should reduce plaque development and improve cardiovascular outcomes in patients with HIV. The ultimate objective of the trial is to inform the best clinical approach to preventing cardiovascular disease in people infected with HIV.

Research suggests that people with HIV are up to twice as likely as people without HIV infection to have heart attacks and other forms of cardiovascular disease, even after controlling for traditional risk factors such as elevated cholesterol, high blood pressure, and smoking. However, there are no evidence-based therapies to lower the increased cardiovascular disease risk in people who have HIV. Study investigators plan to examine gender differences, among other factors, in the effects of statins once the data have been collected.