

[IMAGE]

NSAIDs May Contribute to Congestive Heart Failure

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are commonly prescribed for migraines, sprains, strains, and countless other conditions in which pain and/or inflammation result. NSAIDs have come under fire in recent years, with mounting evidence suggesting possible dangerous side effects associated with their use.

One of the most severe potential side effects may be congestive heart failure (CHF) in susceptible patients, according to a study in the March 27, 2000 issue of the *Archives of Internal Medicine*. Patients admitted to hospitals with a primary diagnosis of CHF (365 cases) were compared with patients without CHF (658 cases) admitted to the same hospitals for other conditions. Patients were interviewed to gather data on recent use of aspirin and other NSAIDs.

Results: Use of NSAIDs in previous week doubled the risk of hospital admission for CHF. Additionally, patients who reported taking higher levels of NSAIDs in the previous week were more likely to be admitted for CHF than patients taking lower levels. Why this relationship exists is unknown, although the authors speculate that possible drug interactions (NSAIDs and other drugs used by heart patients) may contribute to the problem. They emphasize that “NSAIDs should be used with caution in patients with a history of cardiovascular disease.” Talk to your doctor about the potential dangers of NSAIDs and other commonly prescribed drugs.

Reference:

Page J, Henry D. Consumption of NSAIDs and the development of congestive heart failure in elderly patients. *Archives of Internal Medicine*, March 27, 2000;160, pp777-84.

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