

Statin Drugs Used Less Often for Black, Latino Adults

Black and Latino adults are much less likely to take statins to prevent cardiovascular disease compared with white adults.

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Researchers from UT Southwestern Medical Center found that Black and Latino adults at risk for cardiovascular disease are less likely to take [statin drugs](#) compared with white adults with the same risk factors.

Statins are among the most prescribed drugs in the United States. The medications help millions of people manage and lower their total cholesterol and reduce their risk for [heart attack](#) or [stroke](#), according to the [Mayo Clinic](#).

Published in [JAMA Cardiology](#), this study analyzed data on a group of people who completed the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey between January 2013 and March 2020. Researchers accounted for factors associated with increased likelihood of developing cardiovascular disease, such as age, sex, blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes and smoking status.

After adjusting for these risk factors, researchers found that about 24% of Black and Latino participants used statins compared with about 38% of white participants, which is concerning as previous studies have shown that Black and Latino adults are more likely to develop cardiovascular disease compared with other racial groups.

“This adds to the known racial and ethnic disparities already highly prevalent in heart disease,” said lead author Ambarish Pandey, MD, an assistant professor of internal medicine in the Division of Cardiology at UT Southwestern, in a [news release](#). “These findings have the potential to affect how we screen for and treat people who do not have heart disease but may have risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking.”

While previous studies have found lower statin use among Black and Latino adults with existing heart disease or diabetes, this [study](#) is the first to observe statin use across races and ethnicities in people with a range of risk factors.

The study’s first author, Joshua Jacobs, PharmD, a cardiology clinical pharmacist at the University

of Utah, said statin use in high-risk individuals is low overall but especially so among Black and Latino adults. “Statins are cheap and effective at the prevention of heart disease, so this is definitely a large missed opportunity,” he said in the [news release](#).

Pandey hopes the results of the study may “help identify health care access as a target for interventions in order to shrink the racial and ethnic gap for preventive cardiovascular care.”

Click [#Statin](#) or [#Cardiovascular](#) to learn more. There, you’ll find headlines such as “[Statin Reduces Cardiovascular Risk for People With HIV](#),” “[Statin Use Linked to Reduced Risk for Liver Cancer Recurrence](#)” and “[Heart Disease and Related Deaths Persist in Rural, Poor Areas](#).”

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