Don’t Assume Women Are the Same as Men: Include Them in the Trial

The issue of balancing risks and benefits for our patients is at the crux of most health care decisions. Although there is a growing interest in personalized medicine, we still lack high-quality data on the largest group of patients in practice—women. This meta-analysis of statins among persons with coronary disease found a statistically significant reduction in mortality for men but not for women. This review and the accompanying commentary highlight the challenge. Are the benefits of statins less in women and risks greater than men, or are there just not enough women in the clinical trials to demonstrate benefit in women. Unless we increase inclusion of women in clinical trials and report sex-specific data, there will never be sufficient data to achieve optimal care of all of our patients.

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