

Anti-cholesterol drugs cause depression

HYDERABAD, 24 JUNE: For the first time ever scientists at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology have discovered evidence that anti-cholesterol drugs prescribed to help prevent heart attack can be linked to depression and anxiety.

Excess cholesterol causes blockages of arteries in the heart which can dangerously impede blood circulation. Treatment over the past few decades involved drugs called Statins to prevent the excess formation of cholesterol. The drug essentially limits the manufacture of cholesterol. This is the basis for formulation of anti-cholesterol drugs worldwide.

Over the past few years there has been growing concern that these drugs affect mood, but there has been no scientific, or precisely, molecular evidence.

CCMB's Mr Amitabha Chattopadhyay has published a paper linking anti-cholesterol drugs and mood.

His team has shown that regular cholesterol inhibition messes up the function of receptors for Serotonin. This is the neurotransmitter in the brain that deals with depression and anxiety. They demonstrated this by studying the effect of Statin in animal cells.

Conversely they found that adding cholesterol to cells treated with Statin restored the function of the receptors back to the normal levels.

This converse process, however, may not find acceptance in the medical community as it directly risks the increase of heart disease due to cholesterol. # SNS

Misc