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Doctors Oz and Roizen



New treatment for heart failure

"Star Trek" knows about transporter inhibitors: Lieutenant Commander Data used one while on a Federation mission scout ship to prevent himself from being beamed away by a USS Enterprise-E shuttlecraft. Sodium-glucose Cotransporter-2 Inhibitors may provide similarly effective protection from medical woes for people with heart failure.

Known as SGLT2 inhibitors, this Type 2 diabetes medication lowers blood sugar by causing the kidneys to remove sugar from the body through the urine. But according to a new study in *Annals of Internal Medicine*, it is also hugely beneficial for folks with heart failure -- regardless of whether or not they have diabetes. The researchers analyzed eight randomized, controlled trials that included more than 15,000 participants. They found that after one year of treatment, SGLT2 inhibitors were associated with a 32% lower risk for hospitalization due to heart failure and a 26% reduction after two years. In addition, the medication reduced the risk of cardiovascular death by 14%. It seems to work by reducing the sodium content in heart cells which reduces a calcium overload that can cause arrhythmias.

But -- and there is always a but -- the medication does have side effects. The researcher highlighted the risk of genital infections and the Food and Drug Administration says that it also has been associated with kidney problems, leg and foot amputations, decreased bone mineral density and UTIs.

So if you have heart failure, ask your doctor about the benefits and risks of SGLT2 inhibitors for you. And check out the Cleveland Clinic's "Living with Heart Failure" information at www.clevelandclinic.org.

* * *

Five steps to living longer without Alzheimer's

Former "60 Minutes" host Andy Rooney once said, "It's paradoxical that the idea of living a long life appeals to everyone, but the idea of getting old doesn't appeal to anyone." Well, a new study may make you feel that getting old is a great reward for a long, healthy life.

The research, published in *The BMJ*, reveals that if you stick with a healthy lifestyle you can reduce your risk for Alzheimer's by 60% and live healthier, longer. The healthy habits were:

- A brain-healthy Mediterranean-DASH Diet Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay; it contains whole grains, leafy greens and other vegetables, berries, beans, nuts, lean meats, fish, poultry and olive oil and reduced consumption of cheese, butter, fried foods and sweets.
- Late life cognitive activities (such as speed of processing games).
- Moderate or vigorous physical activity (at least 150 minutes a week).
- No smoking.
- Light to moderate alcohol consumption.

The researchers found that those healthy habits increased lifespan and made it so men and women lived a larger proportion of their remaining years without Alzheimer's. At age 65, women without Alzheimer's who followed four or five healthy factors had a life expectancy of 21.5 years, while those with zero or one of the healthy factors had 17 years. Men who followed four or five of the healthy habits had a life expectancy of 23.1 years -- 5.7 years longer than men aged 65 with zero or one healthy factor. And for info on how to benefit from living younger longer, consider preordering "The Great Age Reboot."

* * *

Health pioneer Michael Roizen, M.D., is chief wellness officer emeritus at the Cleveland Clinic and author of four No. 1 New York Times bestsellers. His next book is "The Great Age Reboot: Cracking the Longevity Code for a Younger Tomorrow." Do you have a topic Dr. Mike should cover in a future column? If so, please email questions@GreatAgeReboot.com.

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