

Prostate-cancer drug linked to heart risk

A common treatment for prostate cancer may increase the risk for heart disease.

A study in the British Journal of Cancer identified 7,637 men in California who had new diagnoses of localized prostate cancer from 1998 to 2008 and followed them through 2010.

About 30 per cent of the men received androgen deprivation therapy, or ADT, a drug treatment that deprives prostate-cancer cells of male sex hormones, which encourage their growth.

Men who did not have pre-existing cardiovascular disease who underwent ADT had an 81-per-cent increased relative risk for heart failure compared with men who did not get the drug regimen. They also had slightly increased risks for heart-rhythm disorders.

Men treated with ADT who already had cardiovascular disease were also at higher risk for heart rhythm and conduction disorders compared with heart patients who did not get the drugs.

The study controlled for race, age, prostate tumor characteristics, other medications and cardiovascular risk factors.

The lead author, Reina Haque, a research scientist at Kaiser Permanente in Pasadena, Calif., said the results could be particularly important for prostate patients who have risk factors for heart disease.

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