RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDICATION USE AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE HEALTH OUTCOMES IN THE JACKSON HEART STUDY

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Abstract: Even though some medications have the potential to slow the progress of atherosclerosis and development of CVD, there are many at-risk individuals who continue to resist the benefits that are available by not following the advice of medical personnel to follow a modified daily medical regimen that include medication. Nonadherence to prescribed drug regimens is a pervasive medical problem that negatively affects treatment outcomes. This study examined the use of medication by participants in the Jackson Heart Study. Baseline interview data collected from African Americans participating in the Jackson Heart Study were analyzed, focusing on demographic parameters to examine practices and behaviors of the participants and association between those practices and health outcomes. Standardized interviews assessed potential demographic parameters and medication history of 5302 participants. Data were also collected at Annual Follow-Up and Surveillance procedures. During the two weeks prior to the examination visit, almost 52% of the participants reported taking blood pressure medication, 14% took cholesterol medication, 16% took medication for diabetes, and 19% took blood thinning medication. Of those who did not take the prescribed medications, the reasons given were the following: 47% were in a hurry, too busy, or forgot to take medications; 23% were trying to do without medications; 18% had no money to purchase medications; 19% indicated that the medications made them feel bad; 17% felt that they could not carry out daily functions when taking medications. The African American population can benefit from heightened awareness of the risk factors that are associated with CVD, if greater attention is paid to prescribed treatment regimen. Patients who have had a heart attack previously are at an increased risk of death when they do not adhere to the prescribed medication. It has been estimated that one third and two thirds of all patients admitted to hospital with medication-related problems are those who have not been following the prescribed medication program. Adherence to medication leads to positive results.

Key-words: Medication use; minority; African-Americans; Jackson Heart Study; cardiovascular disease