Daily Omega-3 Fatty Acids Benefit HF Patients

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Twelve months of daily doses of omega-3 fatty acids resulted in substantial improvements in chronic heart failure, according to a randomized, placebo-controlled study of 133 patients with mild to moderate chronic heart failure caused by nonischemic dilated cardiomyopathy.

The study demonstrated improvements in left ventricular ejection fraction, peak oxygen uptake (VO_2), exercise duration, and New York Heart Association functional class among patients taking about 5 g of omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) daily for 1 month followed by another 11 months of 2-g daily doses (J. Am. Coll. Cardiol. 2011;57 [doi:10.1016/j.jacc.2010.11.017]).

"These beneficial effects suggest that omega-3 PUFAs may favorably affect cardiac remodeling and the decline of myocardial function in patients with [heart failure (HF)] and may account for the reduction in cardiovascular hospitalizations and hospitalizations for HF observed in our study," wrote Dr. Savina Nodari of the University of Brescia [Italy], and colleagues. Whether omega-3 PUFAs exert similar effects in patients with other types of HF or with more advanced HF remains to be verified, they added.

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