

HEART HEALTH

Report: Patients Not Receiving Ideal Therapy

Heart Failure Report Card

Physicians Overall Grade of Heart Failure, Diagnosis and Treatment

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How Beta-Blockade Scored

Beta-Blockade in Theory

87% of survey physicians said the benefits of beta-blockers are clearly demonstrated in clinical trials

Beta-Blockade in Practice

Physicians report that 62% of their patients are *not* receiving beta-blockers in conjunction with other medications

The Heart Failure Report Card was conducted in conjunction with the Cardiovascular Institute of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Health System, with an educational grant from AstraZeneca LP.



According to a new survey, many heart failure patients are not getting the best available therapy.

(NAPSA)—Despite strong evidence that demonstrates the benefits of adding beta-blockers to standard therapy, thousands of heart failure patients are not receiving this class of drugs as part of their treatment regimens.

That's according to a nationwide survey of 400 cardiologists, internists and general practitioners known as the Heart Failure Report Card. In the survey, 87 percent of physicians polled say they clearly understand the benefits of beta-blockers as seen in clinical trials; however, this understanding isn't translating into practice—physicians report that they prescribe beta-blockers to only one-third of their heart failure patients.

"We developed the Heart Failure Report Card to help us understand the current mindset and treatment patterns of physicians," said Arthur Feldman, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the Cardiovascular Institute of University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) Health System in Pennsylvania.

Based on the responses of the surveyed physicians, researchers

concluded that the key to optimizing heart failure treatment is education about the use of emerging therapies in clinical practice.

About Heart Failure

Heart failure begins when some other condition—a heart attack, high blood pressure, or a heart muscle disorder—damages the heart. It's a condition in which the heart fails to pump blood normally, causing symptoms such as fatigue, shortness of breath, swelling of feet or ankles and possibly, chest discomfort.

In the United States, approximately five million people have heart failure, with 550,000 new cases occurring each year. It is the only major cardiovascular disorder that is increasing in incidence and prevalence, due to an aging population.

Beta-blockers improve heart function by reducing the heart's tendency to beat faster, a consequence of the heart's need to compensate for its weakened pumping action. When used in combination with diuretics, digoxin or ACE inhibitors, beta-blockers can help decrease the symptoms of heart failure.