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### Cholesterol confusion and statin controversy

Robert DuBroff, Michel de Lorgeril

#### Abstract

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 The role of blood cholesterol levels in coronary heart disease (CHD) and the true effect of cholesterol-lowering statin drugs are debatable. In particular, whether statins actually decrease cardiac mortality and increase life expectancy is controversial. Concurrently, the Mediterranean diet model has been shown to prolong life and reduce the risk of diabetes, cancer, and CHD. We herein review current data related to both statins and the Mediterranean diet. We conclude that the expectation that CHD could be prevented or eliminated by simply reducing cholesterol appears unfounded. On the contrary, we should acknowledge the inconsistencies of the cholesterol theory and recognize the proven benefits of a healthy lifestyle incorporating a Mediterranean diet to prevent CHD.

**Key words:** cholesterol, statins, Mediterranean diet, coronary heart disease, cardiovascular disease, mortality

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