



Colchicine for Heart Health

What is colchicine?

Colchicine is a medicine that has been used for many years to treat gout and other inflammatory conditions. Recently, research has shown that colchicine can help prevent heart attacks and strokes in people who already have heart disease or are at high risk for these problems.

How does colchicine help the heart?

Colchicine works by reducing inflammation in the body. Inflammation can make cholesterol build up in the arteries, which can lead to heart attacks and strokes. By lowering inflammation, colchicine helps keep blood vessels healthier and lowers the chance of dangerous events like heart attacks and strokes.

Who should take colchicine for heart health?

Colchicine is recommended for adults who have already had a heart attack, stroke, or have known heart disease. It may also be used for people with several risk factors for heart disease, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, or high cholesterol. Colchicine is not usually used for people who do not have heart disease or risk factors.

How is colchicine taken?

The usual dose for heart protection is **0.5 mg once a day**. It is important to take colchicine exactly as prescribed. Do not take more than the recommended dose, as higher doses can be dangerous.

What are the benefits?

Studies show that colchicine can lower the risk of heart attacks, strokes, and the need for procedures to open blocked arteries. It works best when taken along with other heart medicines, like statins and aspirin.

What are the possible side effects?

Most people tolerate colchicine well. The most common side effect is diarrhea or stomach upset, which happens in about 1 out of 10 people. Rarely, colchicine can cause muscle pain, weakness, or changes in blood counts. Serious side effects are uncommon when taken at the recommended dose.

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Who should NOT take colchicine?

Colchicine should not be used by people with severe kidney or liver problems. It should also be avoided if taking certain medicines that interact with colchicine, such as clarithromycin, ketoconazole, or cyclosporine. Always tell your doctor about all the medicines you take.

Summary

Colchicine is a safe and effective medicine for preventing heart attacks and strokes in people with heart disease or high risk. It works by reducing inflammation in the arteries. Most people tolerate it well, but some may have stomach upset. Always follow your doctor's instructions and let them know about any concerns.

References

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