



Effective Health Care

Dietary Supplements in the Elderly Taking Cardiovascular Medications

Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Dietary supplements in the elderly taking cardiovascular medications will go forward for refinement as a systematic review. The scope of this topic, including populations, interventions, comparators, and outcomes, will be further developed in the refinement phase.
- When key questions have been drafted, they will be posted on the AHRQ Web site and open for public comment. To sign up for notification when this and other Effective HealthCare (EHC) Program topics are posted for public comment, please go to <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/join-the-email-list1/>.

Topic Description

Nominator: Individual

Nomination Summary: The nominator is interested in the risks and benefits to elderly patients on cardiovascular medications of taking dietary supplements. She questions whether any dietary supplements (including herbal supplements) augment the most common cardiovascular medications and whether any commonly used dietary supplements decrease the effectiveness of these medications or increase adverse events.

Key Questions from Nominator: 1. For the elderly taking cardiovascular medications, what are the comparative risks and benefits of commonly used dietary supplements?

Considerations

- The topic meets all EHC Program selection criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)
- Cardiovascular disease is a major cause of morbidity and mortality in the elderly. At the same time, a significant proportion of American adults, including the elderly, take dietary supplements. However research on both efficacy and drug-supplement interactions is difficult to come by. No recent reviews were identified that sufficiently answer the nominator's question. A review in this area would be useful to both health care providers and consumers.

- Not enough literature was identified for a review focused solely on the elderly; therefore, the review on this topic will be broadened to adults, with a focus on subpopulations including the elderly and different minority groups.