

January 9, 2007

To: AACE Membership

Subject: AACE Alert on Prescribing cabergoline and pergolide

The New England Journal of Medicine published two articles and an editorial concerning the relationship between dopamine agonists and the risks of heart valve disease in the January 4th 2007 edition. These were European studies and the vast majority of the patients had Parkinson's Disease and were taking much higher doses of these agents than would typically be required for treatment of hyperprolactinemia. The first article by Rene Schade et al demonstrates an association between the use of pergolide or cabergoline and valvular heart disease. There was no association noted with cabergoline doses under 3 mg per day and no association with other dopamine agonists, such as bromocriptine. In the second article by Renzo Zanettini et al, the study was limited to patients with Parkinson's disease with average daily dosing of about 3.6 mg daily in the cabergoline group and 2.8 mg in the pergolide group. The groups were not divided out by daily dose in this study.

For patients with prolactin disorders, the use of bromocriptine and typical doses of cabergoline that fall below 3 mg per day do not appear to be associated with an increased risk of valvular disease. It would be prudent to discuss these issues with patients and evaluate those patients that may be at particular risk for valvular disease. AACE will continue to monitor the situation and update you as more information becomes available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven M. Petak". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steven M. Petak, MD, JD, FACE, FCLM
President, American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists