

## **Viagra linked to heart attacks and 522 deaths**

A study conducted at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles has shown a high number of deaths and serious cardiovascular events may be associated with the use of Viagra, the most commonly prescribed therapy for erectile dysfunction in men.

These findings were presented March 14 at the meeting of the American College of Cardiologists in Anaheim, Calif.

Researchers Sanjay Kaul, M.D., and Babak Azarbal, M.D. analyzed 1,473 major adverse events reported to the Food & Drug Administration. These included 522 deaths, primarily due to cardiovascular causes.

According to Dr. Kaul, the study's senior author, the majority of deaths were associated with standard Viagra dosages (70% of the deaths were associated with the 50mg dose), were due to cardiovascular causes and appeared to be clustered around the time of dosing (two thirds of deaths in which the time from ingestion to death was reported, occurred within four-five hours of taking Viagra).

The majority of deaths occurred in patients younger than 65 years of age, who had no reported cardiac risk factors.

Although the study also confirmed the already well-documented increased risk of Viagra when taken with nitrates, most of the deaths (88%) actually occurred in patients who were not taking nitrates.

**SOURCE:** "Viagra May Have Adverse Cardiovascular Effects," Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Mar. 15, 2000.