

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Issues Draft Recommendation Statement on Screening for Lipid Disorders in Children and Adolescents

Task Force found there is not enough evidence to recommend for or against screening

WASHINGTON, D.C. – December 22, 2015 – Today, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) posted a draft recommendation statement and draft evidence reviews on Screening for Lipid Disorders in Children and Adolescents.

The Task Force looked at whether screening for high cholesterol in children and adolescents up to age 20 leads to a lower risk of cardiovascular events in adulthood. It found that there was not enough evidence to assess the balance of benefits and harms of screening in this age group. **This is an I statement** and is not a recommendation for or against screening. This recommendation is unchanged from the previous recommendation statement on this topic in 2007.

Grade in this recommendation:

I: The balance of benefits and harms cannot be determined.

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“There is currently not enough research to determine whether screening all average-risk children and adolescents without symptoms leads to better cardiovascular health in adulthood. In addition, the potential harms of long-term use of cholesterol-lowering medication by children and adolescents are not yet understood,” said Task Force Vice-Chair David C. Grossman, M.D., M.P.H. The Task Force endorses that all children and teens should eat a healthy diet, maintain a normal weight, and engage in physical activity.

“The Task Force recognizes the importance of cardiovascular health for young people and calls for more research on the benefits and harms of screening and treating young people for high cholesterol.” said Task Force member Douglas K. Owens, M.D., M.S.

The Task Force’s draft recommendation statement and draft evidence reviews have been posted for public comment on the Task Force Web site at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org. Comments can be submitted from December 22 to January 25 at <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Name/us-preventive-services-task-force-opportunities-for-public-comment>.

The Task Force is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine that works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medications.

Dr. Grossman is a board-certified pediatrician recognized for his research on clinical preventive services, injury prevention, and Native American health. He is a senior investigator at the Group Health Research Institute in Seattle, WA and a practicing pediatrician at Group Health, where he is also a medical director for population health strategy. He is also a professor of health services and adjunct professor of pediatrics at the University of Washington.

Dr. Owens is the Henry J. Kaiser, Jr., professor at Stanford University, where he is also a professor of medicine, health research and policy (by courtesy), and management science and engineering (by courtesy), as well as senior fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies.

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