

Press Release

Hawthorn extract WS[®] 1442 helps heart failure patients

Karlsruhe, 2nd of July, 2008. A report by the internationally renowned Cochrane Collaboration adds weight to the use of standardized Hawthorn extract WS[®] 1442 in the treatment of chronic heart failure. 10 double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled clinical studies provided suitable data for meta-analysis on the effect of Hawthorn on heart failure symptoms and the function of the heart. The researchers found that the “results suggest that there is a significant benefit in symptom control and physiologic outcomes from hawthorn extract as an adjunctive treatment for chronic heart failure.”

"If I had chronic heart failure, I certainly would consider using it" said review co-author Dr. Max Pittler, deputy director of complementary medicine at Peninsula Medical School in Exeter, England.

Chronic heart failure is a widespread condition in which the heart pumps the blood inadequately. It is much more prevalent in elderly people and is likely to become more common because people are living longer. In addition, certain risk factors for heart disease such as smoking, a high-fat diet, and high blood pressure are affecting more people in today's world.

The Cochrane researchers combined the data from 10 studies with a total of 855 patients into a meta-analysis for physiological outcomes such as maximal workload of the heart or exercise tolerance. They found a significant beneficial effect not only on the physiological measures but also on common symptoms of heart failure such as fatigue and shortness of breath. Side effects were reported to be infrequent and mild.

Nine out of the ten trials analyzed through the Cochrane Collaboration were studies using Dr. Willmar Schwabe's special Hawthorn extract WS[®] 1442. This unique extract is standardized to contain 18.75% oligomeric procyanidins and is contained in Schwabe's Crataegutt[®] products, the No.1 selling hawthorn medicines in Europe.

WS[®] 1442 was also used in a major international trial, the SPICE study that investigated its effect on the mortality and morbidity of nearly 2700 patients with heart failure (NYHA stages II to III). This study may help to answer the question of the influence of Hawthorn on the prognosis of heart failure[2]. An initial presentation of this study was made at the 2007

American College of Cardiology congress. In brief, WS[®] 1442 was shown to postpone cardiac death in patients with heart failure compared to placebo and to provide additional benefit also in patients already treated optimally with standard heart failure medications.

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[1] Pittler MH, Guo R, Ernst E. Hawthorn extract for treating chronic heart failure. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2008, Issue 1.

[2] Holubarsch CJF, Colucci WS, Meinertz T, Gaus W, Tendera M. Survival and Prognosis: Investigation of Crataegus Extract WS[®]1442 (SPICE) in Chronic Heart Failure (CHF). 56th annual congress of the American College of Cardiology ACC, Late-Breaking Clinical Trials, New Orleans, March 27th 2007.