

# Diabetes Study Halted Due to Deaths

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Recent news reports across the country focus on startling news raising questions about whether the medically accepted technique of treating diabetes with medication to lower blood sugar levels might be increasing the chance of a heart attacks or strokes.

The government announced Wednesday, Feb. 6, 2008, that the 10,000-patient ACCORD clinical trial involving diabetes treatment has been halted 18 months early due to increased risk of patients' deaths. The trial was stopped after the Data Safety and Monitoring Board found that the rigorous treatment increased the patients' risk of death by 25 percent.

Medical experts, such as the American Diabetes Association, are telling diabetics to continue with their current medications and check with their physicians if problems arise. Physicians groups are asking for more research to be conducted to determine the cause of the deaths.

However, the controversial results will certainly bring into question whether the methods used to treat diabetes actually protects the heart and is very likely to call the safety of the diabetes drug Avandia into question yet again. The Food and Drug Administration issued an alert about the drug after the study findings were revealed.

"We have confounding issues," Dr. James Dudl told The San Diego Union-Tribune. Dudl works at the Kaiser Permanente's Endocrine Clinic in San Diego, one of 77 research centers across the country involved in the study. The ACCORD trial included more than 10,000 U.S. and Canadian diabetics.

"My gut feeling is that the reason is in the medicine --- one of the drugs or a combination of drugs used to treat diabetes," Dudl told the newspaper.

Diabetics are at high risk to heart disease. Medical statistics show that the cause of death for about two-thirds of the diabetics who die in the United States each year is a heart attack or stroke.

A local law firm is currently investigating claims involving the use of Avandia and death, heart attack, congestive heart failure as well as fractures in the hands and feet. If you or a loved one has taken Avandia and experienced any of the above situations, please contact the firm today.

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