

## The BMJ

## The BMJ Today: Statins and The BMJ

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Even those whose daily diet does not include the pages of the national press could not have missed the furore over *The BMJ's* very public correction of an error in two articles this week.

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In an Analysis article, John Abramson and colleagues questioned the merits of extending the routine use of statins to people at low risk of cardiovascular disease. In their conclusion and in a summary box they stated that side effects of statins occur in 18-20% of people. In another, Aseem Malhotra repeated this statistic.

Both articles have been corrected, and those who are interested in the prepublication history can view it on [bmj.com](http://bmj.com). They may also like to wait for the results of an independent panel whose terms have now been confirmed and are available on [bmj.com](http://bmj.com).

The panel will be chaired by Iona Heath, former chair of the Royal College of General Practitioners and of *The BMJ's* ethics committee, and will have six other members from the UK and US. To ensure full accountability and transparency, all submissions to the panel and all documents used by the panel will be placed in the public domain on [bmj.com](http://bmj.com), either at the time of submission or as part of the panel's final report. Panel members and all those submitting information to the panel will also make full declarations of their interests.

The reactions to *The BMJ's* initial statement and correction have been a mixed bag, with one doctor charging that journals benefit from scandals saying that "doctors are left with picking up the pieces of distressed patients and breakdown of therapeutic relationships."

Another questions *The BMJ's* editorial decision to "have a go at a number of conditions and treatments, including ADHD and the treatment thereof."

One group of London based primary care doctors, who will be at the forefront of dispensing statins to those at low risk, want more information. "Many general practitioners will be familiar with patients who report that they have experienced side effects after starting statins. These side effects are often severe enough for patients to stop taking statins," they wrote.

Another respondent suggested that "many far worse errors exist in the published medical literature without hide nor hair of a correction, let alone an editorial retraction."

Those who have had their fill of statins might like to check out a research paper published recently. A research paper from a group of US academics, which looks at the publication status of trial results of vaccine trials and time from completion to publication in peer reviewed journals. It concludes that while most vaccine trials are published eventually or the results posted in [ClinicalTrials.gov](http://ClinicalTrials.gov), delays to publication of several years are common. "Actions should focus on the timely dissemination of data from vaccine trials to the public," they say.

**Deborah Cohen** is investigations editor for *The BMJ*

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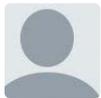
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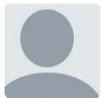
**kbrendel** Mod • 5 months ago

The members of the panel were chosen by The BMJ's editor in chief, Fiona Godlee.

Best wishes

Kelly Brendel, Assistant web editor at The BMJ

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**susanne stevens** • 5 months ago

Can you let us know how members of the panel were chosen?

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