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**Cholesterol-lowering effects of a proprietary Chinese red-yeast-rice dietary supplement.**

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**BACKGROUND:** We examined the cholesterol-lowering effects of a proprietary Chinese red-yeast-rice supplement in an American population consuming a diet similar to the American Heart Association Step I diet using a double-blind, placebo-controlled, prospectively randomized 12-wk controlled trial at a university research center. **OBJECTIVE:** We evaluated the lipid-lowering effects of this red-yeast-rice dietary supplement in US adults separate from effects of diet alone. **DESIGN:** Eighty-three healthy subjects (46 men and 37 women aged 34-78 y) with hyperlipidemia [total cholesterol, 5.28-8.74 mmol/L (204-338 mg/dL); LDL cholesterol, 3.31-7.16 mmol/L (128-277 mg/dL); triacylglycerol, 0.62-2.78 mmol/L (55-246 mg/dL); and HDL cholesterol 0.78-2.46 mmol/L (30-95 mg/dL)] who were not being treated with lipid-lowering drugs participated. Subjects were treated with red yeast rice (2.4 g/d) or placebo and instructed to consume a diet providing 30% of energy from fat, <10% from saturated fat, and <300 mg cholesterol daily. Main outcome measures were total cholesterol, total triacylglycerol, and HDL and LDL cholesterol measured at weeks 8, 9, 11, and 12. **RESULTS:** Total cholesterol concentrations decreased significantly between baseline and 8 wk in the red-yeast-rice-treated group compared with

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the placebo-treated group [(x+/-SD) 6.57+/-0.93 mmol/L (254+/-36 mg/dL) to 5.38+/-0.80 mmol/L (208+/-31 mg/dL); P < 0.001]. LDL cholesterol and total triacylglycerol were also reduced with the supplement. HDL cholesterol did not change significantly.

CONCLUSIONS: Red yeast rice significantly reduces total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, and total triacylglycerol concentrations compared with placebo and provides a new, novel, food-based approach to lowering cholesterol in the general population.

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