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Cardiovascular disease management: Is garlic supplementation a natural alternative?

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Hypertension, hyperglycemia and dyslipidemia are leading causes of cardiovascular diseases. By 2025, the number of people with HTN is estimated to increase by 60%, or about 29% of the world's population. Evidence based on garlic exerting cardioprotective properties has emerged with increasing rigor in recent years. Nurse practitioners in primary care settings play a key role in cardiovascular disease prevention, screening and management and should understand the effects of pharmaceutical as well as alternative therapies. The following integrative review examines eight recent randomized clinical trials for evidence of whether daily garlic supplementation reduces risk for cardiovascular events in adults with cardiovascular diseases. Each study found significant correlation between garlic and improved cardiovascular risk factors. Garlic was found to reduce coronary artery calcification, systolic and diastolic blood pressure and triglycerides. Larger clinical trials over longer time periods are needed and should continue to scrutinize dosage and manufacturing process of garlic supplements before evidence-based practice guidelines can be recommended.

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