

Is there a need to have a Nigeria atherosclerosis society (NAS)?

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Opinion

The risk factors for atherosclerosis and the consequent coronary artery disease (CAD) exists in Nigeria, and these risks are documented by several studies which document a very high prevalence of the precursor dyslipidaemia and the need for efforts to reduce these risks.¹ One of the ways to do this, is to raise awareness and create avenues for the education of the populace in the amelioration of the scourge. It also includes the efforts of professional association(s) to lead and guide these efforts.

There exists several atherosclerotic societies across the world- the European Atherosclerosis Society (EAS), American Atherosclerosis Society (AAS) etc., which help to tackle the scourge of atherosclerosis, a devastating disease that is on the increase worldwide, Nigeria inclusive. Thus, there is the need to create the Nigerian equivalent, the NIGERIAN ATHEROSCLEROTIC SOCIETY. This is necessary considering where we have been coming from. It was initially stated in earlier studies that dyslipidaemia, the precursor and most significant contributor to atherosclerosis, was uncommon in the Nigerian population.^{2,3} Recent studies from all the various regions of the country confirms that it is not only in existence, but has a very high prevalence.⁴⁻¹⁵

Clearly, between the earlier and the more recent studies, there has possibly been a drastic epidemiologic shift in the patterns, favouring a tendency to atherosclerosis, and its consequences, further reinforcing the need for something to be done.

A number of our patients are on statins and other lipid lowering therapies, for the control of dyslipidaemia. These medications, like all agents used in therapy, have limiting adverse reactions to their use. The statins are not spared in this scourge.

Recently the EAS came out with guidelines in the evaluation and management of symptoms associated with muscle adverse effects of statins, the most common adverse event with their use.¹⁶ This reinforces the value of such professional associations, further justifying this call for an Atherosclerosis society in Nigeria.

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Conflicts of interest

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