

CANTOS Trial: What does it mean for RA?

You may have seen the press about the CANTOS trial (below). As a rheumatologist, I've been thinking about what it means for you and others with RA. The Canakinumab Anti-inflammatory Thrombosis Outcome Study (CANTOS) studied whether reducing inflammation can reduce risk of heart disease- in patients without inflammatory disease. The study recruited patients who suffered a heart attack and randomized them to either receive canakinumab injections or a placebo (salt water injections) to see if the drug could prevent a second heart attack. Canakinumab works by blocking a protein in the body that promotes inflammation, IL-1beta.

Canakinumab was tested for RA a few years ago and it only helped control RA disease activity slightly better than placebo. That's why it's not a treatment option for RA. Even though canakinumab is not a treatment for RA, it does answer a larger question when thinking about heart disease. Should we be targeting inflammation just like we do with cholesterol levels and blood pressure?

This trial tells us the answer is YES. CANTOS enrolled individuals with inflammatory markers well below the average RA patients. In RA, where the level of inflammation is much higher, I believe controlling inflammation will play an even larger role in reducing risk for heart attacks.

Want more information? Visit us at <http://www.liira.org>



As a participant in the LiiRA study, you are helping us to understand just how much controlling inflammation may help reduce heart disease risk specifically in RA. The cardiac PETs you had estimate your risk of heart disease. The baseline scan gives us a sense of your risk when your inflammation is active, and the second, after (hopefully) controlling inflammation.

Thanks again for being a part of LiiRA!

Find the links to CANTOS articles on our website:

- [*New England Journal of Medicine*](#)
- [*New York Times*](#)
- [*CBS News*](#)

What would you like to see in our next newsletter? Contact us!

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Enrollment Numbers

Screened: 45
Enrolled: 24
Completed: 7
Target: 75 patients over 3 years
(We have ~2 more years to go)



What's new?

We have added a stress questionnaire to the baseline and final visits. We will study how stress may impact your response to treatment and heart function.

Team Spotlight



Ethan joined the team in February 2017 and is studying to become a nurse. He recruits at BWH, MGH, and MGH Waltham. Ethan loves to go fishing and workout. His favorite season is fall and he is looking forward to cider donuts!

Meet the rest of the team here:
<http://www.liira.org/the-team.html>

Our Sites

