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Antithrombotic therapy in the Netherlands: new insights from nationwide data

Chen, Q.

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STELLINGEN

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Antithrombotic Therapy in the Netherlands

New insights from nationwide data

1. Novel medications and updated clinical guidelines do not necessarily lead to advances in disease management and improvement in prognosis.
2. There might be safety or efficacy concerns about prescribing direct oral anticoagulants to atrial fibrillation patients with certain patient characteristics, but whether these concerns are supported by high-quality evidence can be questioned. (This thesis)
3. Higher proportions of antiplatelet drug use might explain why male patients with atrial fibrillation had a higher bleeding risk but a lower ischemic stroke risk than female patients. (This thesis)
4. “Drugs don’t work in patients who don’t take them.” (C. Everett Koop, a former surgeon general of the United States, 1985) Improving anticoagulant compliance in patients with atrial fibrillation remains a pivotal path to further reduce the risk of ischemic stroke. (This thesis)
5. Although the bidirectional association between atrial fibrillation and cancer is not unexpected and may not be fully explained by causal mechanisms, coexisting atrial fibrillation and cancer should receive more research and clinical attention given the high disease burden and the relevance for optimal management. (This thesis)
6. The fragile balance between thrombosis and bleeding in patients with both atrial fibrillation and cancer warrants fine-tuning of risk stratification to optimize anticoagulation therapy.
7. Randomized controlled trials are the preferred study design but often challenging to perform among pregnant women. Large-scale perinatal registries provide an alternative way to supplement evidence.
8. “Observing differences in disease distribution across populations often inspires causal hypotheses.” (Matthew P Fox et al, *Am J Epidemiol*, 2022) Most initial knowledge about COVID-19 actually came from descriptive epidemiology, which is a useful tool that should not be overlooked.
9. “Better a diamond with a flaw than a pebble without one.” (Jiao Hong, a Chinese proverb, 1540-1620) The world is imperfect, so are real-world data, but they are informative for understanding the world.