

# Statins raise operation risks

**Chris Smyth** Health Editor

Patients should stop taking statins before heart surgery to cut their risk of fatal complications, research has found.

The cholesterol-lowering drugs did not prevent heart muscle damage or atrial fibrillation, but patients on statins were more likely to suffer acute kidney injury, which kills more than 15,000 patients a year.

More than seven million patients in Britain take statins to protect against heart attacks and strokes, and the researchers said the findings, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*,

did not suggest that they should stop. About 17,000 patients a year have heart bypass surgery in Britain and most will already be on statins. The British Heart Foundation said the findings suggested that they take a break from statins while having the operation.

Barbara Casadei, of the University of Oxford, who led the study: said: "The results of our large randomised placebo-controlled trial conclusively prove that there are no benefits to taking statins shortly before and after heart surgery to reduce postoperative complications but there is an adverse effect on kidney function."

Times 5 May 2016