

Current Use Of Cipro And Levaquin Associated With Increased Risk Of Detached Retina Eye Injury

Neither Recent Nor Past Use Of These Antibiotics In Fluoroquinolones Class Was Related To Retinal Detachment

(Posted by Tom Lamb at www.DrugInjuryWatch.com on April 4, 2012; see <http://bit.ly/HgGpp8>)

Patients taking oral antibiotics known as fluoroquinolones such as Cipro (ciprofloxacin) and Levaquin (levofloxacin) are at an increased risk for developing a detached retina, an eye injury which can lead to permanent blindness if not medically treated in a timely manner.

This new drug safety finding comes from a case-control study, "[Oral Fluoroquinolones and the Risk of Retinal Detachment](#)", which was published in the April 4, 2012 edition of the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*.

From the [Abstract for this April 2012 JAMA article](#) concerning Levaquin, Cipro, and similar antibiotics possibly causing damage to one's eyes:

Context Fluoroquinolones are commonly prescribed classes of antibiotics. Despite numerous case reports of ocular toxicity, a pharmacoepidemiological study of their ocular safety, particularly retinal detachment, has not been performed.

Objective To examine the association between use of oral fluoroquinolones and the risk of developing a retinal detachment....

Results From a cohort of 989 591 patients, 4384 cases of retinal detachment and 43 840 controls were identified. Current use of fluoroquinolones was associated with a higher risk of developing a retinal detachment (3.3% of cases vs 0.6% of controls; adjusted rate ratio [ARR], 4.50 [95% CI, 3.56-5.70])....

Conclusion Patients taking oral fluoroquinolones were at a higher risk of developing a retinal detachment compared with nonusers, although the absolute risk for this condition was small.

For some insight about the underlying medical study and its significance from one of the researchers, Mahyar Etmnan, PharmD -- who is from the Therapeutic Evaluation Unit, Child and Family Research Institute of British Columbia, and the Department of Medicine, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada -- we move to this *Reuters* news report, "[Common antibiotics tied to eye emergencies: study](#)", published on April 3, 2012:

People treated by ophthalmologists for the emergency condition were five times more likely to be taking drugs known as fluoroquinolones, which include ciprofloxacin (marketed under names including Zoxan, Proquin and Cipro) and levofloxacin (Levaquin, Cravit), than those who didn't have retinal detachment.

"We know that these drugs are toxic to connective tissue and cartilage," said Mahyar Etmnan, the study's lead author, noting past studies linking fluoroquinolones with damage to Achilles and shoulder tendons.

"We wanted to see whether this damage also may translate in the eye, because there's lots of connective tissue in the eye," Etmnan, from the Child and Family Research Institute of British Columbia in Vancouver, told Reuters Health.

Retinal detachment, which starts as the appearance of lines, dots or "floaters" across the eye, can cause permanent blindness in some cases if it's not surgically treated within a few days....

Retinal detachment is rare, Etminan concluded, "but because the condition is quite serious, I don't think it would hurt to let someone know... if you notice these flashes of light or floaters, be sure you get it checked out."

Of course, we will continue to monitor this emerging drug safety issue involving Levaquin, Cipro, and other antibiotics in the fluoroquinolones class of drugs.

Attorney [Tom Lamb](#) represents people in personal injury and wrongful death cases involving unsafe prescription drugs or medication errors. The above article was posted originally on his blog, **Drug Injury Watch** – with live links and readers' Comments.
<http://www.DrugInjuryWatch.com>