

CORRESPONDENCE



Clarification of Funding of Early Lung Cancer Study

TO THE EDITOR: In our article¹ published in the October 26, 2006, issue of the *Journal*, one of the disclosed sources of funding was the Foundation for Lung Cancer: Early Detection, Prevention and Treatment, which provided partial support for our research. For full transparency we wish to inform you that \$3.6 million (virtually all of the Foundation's funding) was contributed in 2000 through 2003 as an unrestricted gift by the Vector Group, the parent company of Liggett Tobacco, which manufactures cigarettes.

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This letter (10.1056/NEJMc086128) was published at www.nejm.org on April 2, 2008.

1. The International Early Lung Cancer Action Program Investigators. Survival of patients with stage I lung cancer detected on CT screening. *N Engl J Med* 2006;355:1763-71.

Torcetrapib and Coronary Events

TO THE EDITOR: Barter et al. (Nov. 22 issue)¹ report the findings in the Investigation of Lipid Level Management to Understand its Impact in Atherosclerotic Events (ILLUMINATE) trial of torcetrapib for the prevention of cardiovascular events. Was the result really as unexpected and its explanation as enigmatic as Rader suggests in his accompanying editorial?² Taking into account our knowledge about the function of cholesteryl ester

transfer protein (CETP) and the fact that a heterozygous genetic CETP deficiency is associated with an increased prevalence of cardiovascular disease despite increased high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol,³ the answer is clearly no. Can the off-target effect of torcetrapib on blood pressure and the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system really explain its failure? Apparently, these effects of torcetrapib were not considered to be relevant when the ILLUMINATE trial was launched. Furthermore, it is disappointing that Barter et al. did not analyze whether a history of diabetes, which almost half their patients had, or hypertriglyceridemia influenced the outcome. It would not be surprising if the rate of excess cardiovascular events with torcetrapib was changed among patients who had diabetes, hypertriglyceridemia, or both. In contrast to serum potassium and bicarbonate levels, this information would further our knowledge about the role of CETP.

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1. Barter PJ, Caulfield M, Eriksson M, et al. Effects of torcetra-

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