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## Using drug-coated stents for improving coronary blood flow (USA)

Drug-coated stents may be more dangerous than bare-metal counterparts. Nearly a third of patients who had drug-coated stents implanted in vein grafts to improve coronary blood flow died within 32 months, but there were no deaths among those who had similar vein grafts with traditional bare-metal stents, according to a study reported in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* [1, 2]. The study included 75 people who had received such grafts, often multiple, because of problems in 96 of the grafted vessels. A total of 60 stents coated with the drug sirolimus were implanted in 47 vessels in 38 patients, while 37 patients got 54 bare-metal stents implanted in 49 blood vessels. In a follow-up period that averaged 32 months, 11 (29 %) of the patients who got drug-coated stents died. There were no deaths in the group that received bare-metal stents.

Study suggests electronic health records may not improve quality-of-care. Electronic health records (EHRs) make little difference in the quality of medical care, at least when it comes to walk-in doctor visits," according to a study in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*. To see if EHRs, as they are used now, had an effect on quality, the researchers "reviewed ambulatory care visits to non-federally funded, community, office-based physician practices

throughout the U.S. Then the researchers cross-referenced these visits with 17 ambulatory quality indicators. Overall, there was no difference in performance between ambulatory visits with and without use of EHRs." However, visits to medical practices using EHRs performed slightly better on two indicators: avoiding tranquilizers for patients with depression and avoiding routine urinalysis during general medical examinations. But, EHRs were associated with a lower quality-of-care when it came to prescribing the cholesterol-lowering drugs statins to patients with high cholesterol.

### References

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2. Vermeersch P, Agostoni P, Verheye S, Van den Heuvel P, Convens C, Van den Branden F, et al. Increased late mortality after sirolimus-eluting stents versus bare-metal stents in diseased saphenous vein grafts: results from the randomized DELAYED RRISC Trial. *J Am Coll Cardiol*. 2007;50:261-7