

Heart safety of non-heart drugs questioned

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A New York heart surgeon is calling for more testing to ensure the cardiovascular safety of drugs developed primarily for non-cardiovascular medical problems.

Dr. Jeffrey Borer of NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center in New York said regulatory bodies should also have the authority to mandate continuing evaluation of drug effects, even after drugs are approved for marketing.

"The importance of evaluating the cardiovascular safety of new drugs has been highlighted by recent examples of drugs -- anti-arthritis drugs and others -- that were withdrawn from the market when unacceptable cardiovascular risks were discovered after regulatory approval," Borer said Friday in a release.

Borer's recommendations, made recently at the European Society of Cardiology in Vienna, were drawn in part from an August 2007 article in the European Heart Journal.

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