Lower Cholesterol and Prevent Heart Disease Without Drugs

According to the CDC, heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. On the surface it sounds dreadful, but this fact becomes good news when we realize that heart disease is preventable and, in some cases, reversible.

Heart Disease is Preventable and Can Be Reversible

Although there are many genetic factors that determine your risk of heart disease, it is still preventable and can be reversible. This is because the most common cause of heart disease, atherosclerosis, is caused by factors that are under our control.

Although atherosclerosis is technically the buildup of fatty plaques in your arteries, this does not mean that fat itself is the only factor to consider. In fact, many studies have shown that low-fat diets do not reduce the risk of heart disease at all.

Fat is Not Clogging Your Arteries

Atherosclerosis is not caused by fat clogging your arteries. Fat isn’t the problem. Atherosclerosis isn’t even the problem, it is the solution to the problem that is caused by oxidized LDL cholesterol.

Recommended: *How To Heal Your Gut*

LDL – The Misunderstood Lipoprotein

LDL (low-density lipoprotein) is commonly referred to as “bad cholesterol”, but it is actually necessary for our survival.

Think of LDL as a superhero with a very short temper. LDL brings nutrients like cholesterol and vitamins to our cells, saving their lives from those evil free radicals. Unfortunately, if the LDL interacts with these free radicals in the blood, it begins to oxidize.

The now oxidized LDL goes on a temper tantrum causing damage to the endothelial cells (cells that line the inside of our blood vessels). The endothelial damage triggers macrophages (immune system cells) to try to keep the oxidized LDL from doing any more damage.

The macrophage convinces the oxidized LDL to hand in its superhero costume and become an inert, non-toxic fatty plaque that resides between the walls of the blood vessel. Our body creates this plaque to keep the oxidized LDL from damaging more cells, which is why atherosclerosis is part of the solution.

Product Recommendation: Lipicept Cholesterol Support • 120c – HCP Formulas

(Don’t) Just Take a Statin

After hearing that there is indeed a link between LDL cholesterol and heart disease, it is tempting take whatever we can to lower our cholesterol. This is why cholesterol-lowering drugs called statins are consistently among the top-selling prescriptions in the world.

One reason why statins are so prolific is because they work. In fact, They have been found to consistently lower plasma LDL levels by 25–35% and reduce the frequency of heart attacks by

25–30%. This is nothing short of miraculous, at-least until you learn what statins actually do.

Recommended: *How To Reverse Fatty Liver Disease (Diet Plan Included)*

The Dark Side of Statins

Statins work by inhibiting an enzyme called HMG-CoA reductase. When this enzyme is inhibited, cholesterol production by the liver is stopped, which leads to lower LDL levels in the blood. At the same time, inhibiting HMG-CoA reductase impairs our ability produce coenzyme Q10 – a molecule that is vital for cellular health and mitochondrial function.

Coenzyme Q1o allows our mitochondria to produce energy efficiently so our cells can survive and thrive. When our levels of coenzyme Q10 are low, the ability of our muscles to function and recover plummets. This causes muscle pain and inflammation, which also happens to be the most commonly reported adverse effect from taking statins. What a coincidence! Other common adverse effects from taking statins related to a lack of coenzyme Q10 are a decrease in cognitive function and liver damage.

It is also important to mention that having low cholesterol comes with its own side effects. Hormonal imbalances like low testosterone, increased fatigue, increased frequency of sickness, and reduced ability to digest fats may result from having low cholesterol. This is because cholesterol provides us with the building blocks for sex hormones, stress hormones, and bile salts that are necessary for survival.

There May Still Be a Place for Statins

Although statins do come with many risks, they may be helpful

for people have genetic risk factors for heart disease. But even if you do have a family history of heart disease, you can still address it more effectively by naturally increasing the activity of your LDL receptors.

Recommended: *Probiotics, Bacteria, and Our Health*

The Best Way to Reverse Heart Disease

Our liver contains many of our LDL receptors. When these receptors are active, they draw excess LDL cholesterol back to the liver, giving it less of a chance to get oxidized and cause problems.

We can increase LDL receptor activity in 4 ways:

1. Reduce The Concentration of Cholesterol in the Liver

The liver is the regulator of cholesterol levels in the body. It produces cholesterol and sends it out to the cells using LDL particles and removes cholesterol by turning it into bile salts and excreting it in the feces.

When we eat high fiber foods like split peas, lentils, artichokes, peas, and broccoli, the fiber prevents the bile from being reabsorbed. This forces the liver to increase its LDL receptor activity to bring LDL cholesterol back to the liver and synthesize more bile.

This approach to controlling LDL cholesterol levels is not just theory. Studies show that heart-attack survivors who adopt a high-fiber diet reduce the risk of a recurrence by about 40 percent, compared to survivors who make no dietary changes. According to the American Heart Association Eating Plan, you can reap the benefits of fiber by increasing your

fiber intake to 25 to 30 grams a day.

Studies have also shown polyunsaturated fats like omega 3s and 6s to decrease cholesterol, but this comes with the risk of increasing the oxidization of LDL. This is because polyunsaturated fats are easily oxidized, which can lead to an increase in oxidants and free radicals in the body. These compounds will then interact with LDL causing it to oxidize. For this reason, it may be best to limit the consumption of all polyunsaturated fats if you have heart disease.

2. Decrease Your Levels of Inflammation

Inflammation is the process that our body carries out to heal itself, and LDL cholesterol is an important player in this process. Whenever there is damage or trauma, the liver increases LDL output and decreases LDL receptor activity so that the LDL stays in circulation and aids the healing process. This is why when we are stressed, sick, or hurt our cholesterol levels will tend to be higher.

When our cells are constantly undergoing trauma due to our own immune system (autoimmune disease) or chronic toxic stress (due to emotional stress, environmental toxins, and/or dietary toxins), our system will be in a chronic state of inflammation with high cholesterol.

To reduce your inflammation, focus on removing toxins from your environment and diet, increasing the quality of your sleep, reducing emotional stress, and increasing your level of low intensity activities like walking or yoga. You can also supplement with anti-inflammatory foods like turmeric or vitamins like vitamin E and C to reduce oxidative stress.

You can track your inflammation levels by measuring your C-reactive protein levels with a blood test. C-reactive protein is created by the liver when there is inflammation in the body, so it is a great indicator for the level of inflammation

in the body. Keeping your C-reactive protein level Below 1 mg/L is commonly suggested, but Dr. Chris Masterjohn suggests that it is best to keep it lower than .07 mg/L.

Related: ***What Causes Chronic Inflammation, and How To Stop It For Good***

3. Improve Thyroid Function

If you are feeling depressed, losing your hair, and you have high cholesterol, you may need to improve your thyroid function. Low thyroid function leads to increased levels of cholesterol, while increased thyroid function may increase LDL receptor activity and decrease LDL cholesterol levels. This leads us to the conclusion that improving thyroid function, if you have an under-active thyroid, will reduce your risk of heart disease.

To improve thyroid function it is important to first reduce inflammation, which shuts down thyroid hormone production. It is also important to make sure that you are eating nutritious foods that leave you feeling satiated. When we are satiated from a nutrient dense meal, our thyroid gland gets a signal from the brain that we have enough energy. The thyroid gland responds to the signal by releasing thyroid hormones that improve cellular function throughout the body.

Sleep is also an important factor in improving thyroid function. Make sure you are sleeping at around the same time every night and getting enough sleep, so that you can wake up refreshed rather than tired.

Related: ***Hypothyroidism – Natural Remedies, Causes, and How To Heal the Thyroid***

4. Improve Insulin Sensitivity

Type 2 diabetes is a major risk factor for heart disease and for good reason – insulin, LDL receptor activity, and thyroid

function are intimately linked. For example, when the cells are resistant to insulin (a hormone that helps to stabilize high blood sugar), like in people with type 2 diabetes, it leads to a decrease in thyroid function and LDL receptor activity because the body is perceiving that food is scarce. The result is high cholesterol, high blood sugar, and an even higher risk of heart disease. On the other hand, thyroid function and LDL receptor activity increases when the cells are sensitive to insulin, which leads to stable blood sugar, lower cholesterol, and almost no risk of heart disease.

To increase your sensitivity to insulin, it is important to increase your activity level and decrease the amount of refined foods in your diet. Increasing your activity level by lifting weights, doing body weight exercises, and doing interval training will substantially improve your insulin sensitivity. Replacing refined foods with vegetables and fruits will increase your vitamin and fiber intake, which will help increase your insulin sensitivity and decrease your cholesterol.

Related: *Holistic Guide to Healing the Endocrine System and Balancing Our Hormones*

How to Measure Your Results

To see if your personal heart disease reducing lifestyle program was effective, check your total-to-HDL cholesterol ratio on your next blood panel. Your total-to-HDL cholesterol ratio should between 3 and 4 to ensure healthy cholesterol levels and a substantially reduced risk of heart disease.

Recommended Reading:

- *How to Detoxify and Heal the Lymphatic System*
- *Candida, Gut Flora, Allergies, and Disease*
- *How to Cure Lyme Disease and Virtually Any Other Bacterial Infection, Naturally*

- *Heal Cavities, Gum Disease, Naturally with Organic Oral Care – Toothpaste recipes included*

Sources:

- *Heart Disease Fact Sheet* – CDC
- *HDL, Atherosclerosis, and Emerging Therapies* – NCBI
- *Modification of low density lipoprotein by endothelial cells involves lipid peroxidation and degradation of low density lipoprotein phospholipids* – NCBI
- *Statin Adverse Effects: A Review of the Literature and Evidence for a Mitochondrial Mechanism* – NCBI
- *A historical perspective on the discovery of statins* – NCBI
- *Cholesterol, inflammation and innate immunity* – NCBI
- *The Total-to-HDL Cholesterol Ratio – What Does It Mean?* – Chris Masterjohn PhD
- *CRP Measurement: Methods, Accuracy, and Variability Russell Tracy* – NIH
- *The association between insulin and low-density lipoprotein receptors.* – NCBI
- *Effects of Thyroid Dysfunction on Lipid Profile* – NCBI
- *Cholesterol metabolism* – University of Waterloo
- *The LDL Receptor* – ATVB
- *The Central Role of Thyroid Hormone in Governing LDL Receptor Activity and the Risk of Heart Disease* – Chris Masterjohn PhD
- *Dietary Guidelines to Treat and Prevent Atherosclerosis* – PCRM
- *When does atherosclerosis become irreversible? Chronological change from an early to an advanced atherosclerotic lesion observed by angioscopy.* – NCBI
- *Low-fat dietary pattern and weight change over 7 years: the Women's Health Initiative Dietary Modification Trial.* – NCBI
- *Multiple Risk Factor Intervention Trial* – JAMA Network
- *Mechanism of Action and Physiologic Effects of Thyroid*

Hormones – Colorado State University