

## If high cholesterol doesn't cause heart disease, what does?

Researchers around the world have suggested that atherosclerosis is actually disorder of inflammation and oxidative stress. Risk factors for heart disease are those that contribute to inflammation and oxidative damage:

- ▶ nutrient deficiencies
- ▶ poor glycemic control
- ▶ cigarette smoking
- ▶ homocysteine
- ▶ psychological stress
- ▶ nitric oxide depletion
- ▶ high iron levels
- ▶ microbial infection
- ▶ dietary *trans* fatty acids
- ▶ excessive refined carbohydrate intake
- ▶ excessive omega-6 fatty acid intake and/or deficient omega-3 fatty acid intake

Free radicals and inflammation of any kind inhibit synthesis of nitric oxide, a vital substance that protects against heart disease at every level. Oxidized LDL is indeed harmful, but it is the polyunsaturated fat - not the cholesterol - inside of the particle that oxidizes.

Chronic infections, inflammation and stress raise cholesterol levels and significantly increase the risk of heart attacks. Thus, it is no surprise that elevated cholesterol levels are seen in people with heart disease. The mistake is assuming that it is cholesterol - and not the underlying condition - that causes atherosclerosis

This "oxidative response to inflammation" hypothesis is well-supported by the scientific data and fits everything currently known about heart disease. It is also widely accepted within the research community. Unfortunately, the message that cholesterol is not the culprit has not yet reached most physicians, dietitians and the general public.

Massive conflicts of interest within the medical and scientific community stand in the way of this message being heard. 8 of 9 physicians responsible for writing the cholesterol guidelines receive money from drug companies, and 2/3 of all medical research is funded by the pharmaceutical industry. The result is the perpetuation of the flawed hypothesis that cholesterol and saturated fat cause heart disease.

## A "Heart-Healthy" Lifestyle

- ▶ Learn techniques for reducing and managing stress, and make them a regular part of your life.
- ▶ Maintain a healthy weight - neither too heavy nor too thin.
- ▶ Engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise several days a week, or every day if possible.
- ▶ Don't smoke, and avoid exposure to environmental toxins.
- ▶ Restrict intake of high-glycemic index foods (white flour, white rice, sugar, cold cereals, processed foods), as they have been shown to increase the risk of heart attacks.
- ▶ Avoid processed food, especially foods containing polyunsaturated vegetable oils and *trans* fats.
- ▶ Eat the meat, fat and organ meats of grass-fed, organically raised animals.
- ▶ Cook with butter, coconut oil or palm oil. Never cook with vegetable oils such as canola, safflower, corn and soy as they become easily oxidized and rancid when subjected to heat.
- ▶ Enjoy eggs from free-range chickens regularly. Egg yolks are particularly beneficial, and are most nutritious when consumed raw.
- ▶ Consume raw dairy products, which are rich in beneficial probiotics, enzymes, vitamins and healthy fats. Many people who can't tolerate pasteurized dairy products have no problem with raw dairy.
- ▶ Eat cultured foods (i.e. sauerkraut, yogurt, kefir) and consume fermented beverages (kombucha, kvass, etc.) regularly
- ▶ Take cod liver oil and consume plenty of butter from grass-fed cows to ensure adequate levels of vitamins A, D and K.
- ▶ Increase consumption of omega-3 fatty acids if you are at risk for heart disease or your diet is poor.

# The Truth about Cholesterol

*Separating facts from soft science, industry propaganda and media misinformation*

**"Even if fifty million people say a foolish thing, it is still a foolish thing."**

*- Anatole France*

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:

- ▶ *The Weston A. Price Foundation*  
<http://www.westonaprice.org>
- ▶ *The International Network of Cholesterol Skeptics*  
<http://www.thincs.org>
- ▶ *The Cholesterol Myths*  
<http://www.ravnskov.nu/cholesterol.htm>

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## The Dangers of Statin Drugs

Modern cholesterol lowering drugs act by inhibiting an enzyme (HMG-CoA reductase) needed for the formation of cholesterol in the liver. These HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors, called statins, are sold as Lipitor, Mevacor, Pravastol, Zocor, etc.

**Weakness & muscle wasting:** this is the most common side effect of statin drugs, occurring in as many as one in three users. Muscle aches and pains, back pain, heel pain, weakness and slurring of speech result from statin interference with the production of Coenzyme Q<sub>10</sub> (Co-Q<sub>10</sub>), needed for the muscles to function. These side effects are more common in active people and may not show until three years after commencement of treatment.

**Heart failure:** rates of heart failure have doubled since the arrival of statin drugs. The heart is a muscle that depends on a plentiful supply of Co-Q<sub>10</sub>.

**Rhabdomyolosis:** rapid breakdown of skeletal muscle tissue which may lead to kidney failure and death.

**Cognitive impairment:** many patients have reported memory loss and brain fog, including total global amnesia (episodes of complete memory loss). The implications for pilots and those driving cars and trucks are profound.

**Cancer:** in every study with rodents to date, statins have caused cancer. Most human trials are not carried out for long enough to detect any increase in cancer rates, but in one trial, breast cancer rates of those taking a statin were 1500% higher than those of controls.

**Depression:** numerous studies have linked low cholesterol with depression.

**Birth defects:** almost 50% of pregnant women who took a statin drug in early pregnancy gave birth to a child with malformations.

SOURCES: Weston A. Price Foundation; *The Cholesterol Myths*, by Uffe Ravnskov, MD, PhD

## Cholesterol: a Hero, not a Villain

▶ **Structural integrity:** cholesterol provides the stiffness and stability our cell membranes need to function properly.

▶ **Immune health:** cholesterol is a precursor to corticosteroids, stress hormones that protect us against heart disease and cancer; cholesterol (especially LDL, the so-called “bad cholesterol”) helps fight infection

▶ **Endocrine health:** cholesterol is a precursor to sex hormones (androgen, testosterone, estrogen & progesterone) which govern sexual development, fertility and reproduction

▶ **Protection from free radicals:** recent research shows that cholesterol acts as an antioxidant

▶ **Digestion & absorption:** the bile salts are made from cholesterol. Bile is vital for digestion and assimilation of fats; it is also essential for absorbing fat-soluble vitamins A, D, K & E (which we cannot live without)

▶ **Growth & development:** is especially rich in cholesterol; babies & children need cholesterol to ensure proper development of the brain and nervous system

▶ **Brain & nervous system:** 25% of body cholesterol is in the brain, and myelin (coating of every nerve cell & fiber in the body) is 20% cholesterol; synapse formation is almost entirely dependent on cholesterol

▶ **Intestinal wall:** dietary cholesterol helps maintain the integrity of the intestinal wall; low-cholesterol vegetarian diets can lead to leaky gut syndrome and other intestinal disorders

▶ **Mood:** cholesterol is needed for proper function of serotonin receptors in the brain; low cholesterol levels have been linked to aggressive and violent behavior, depression and suicidal tendencies

▶ **Tissue repair:** cholesterol is a repair substance in the body, used to repair wounds, including tears and irritations in the arteries

## Top 5 Myths about Cholesterol

**MYTH: Eating cholesterol and saturated fat raises the level of cholesterol in your blood.**

TRUTH: Several controlled, long-term studies have shown that dietary intake of cholesterol and saturated fat has no significant effect on the level of cholesterol in your blood.

**MYTH: Diets high in saturated fat and cholesterol promote atherosclerosis and heart disease.**

TRUTH: Many studies show that people who consume primarily saturated fats from animal origin have less heart disease than those who consume primarily polyunsaturated fats from vegetable oils. 75% of the fat in artery clogs is unsaturated, of which over 50% is polyunsaturated.

**MYTH: Elevated levels of LDL cholesterol cause atherosclerosis and heart disease.**

TRUTH: More than 40 trials have demonstrated that lowering cholesterol does not prevent heart attacks. On the contrary, several major studies have shown a higher risk of death with lower levels of cholesterol.

**MYTH: Low cholesterol prevents heart disease and reduces your risk of dying.**

TRUTH: Several large, well-controlled trials have shown an inverse relationship between cholesterol levels and mortality. A recent study at Yale University showed that elderly people die twice as often from heart attacks as those with high cholesterol.

**MYTH: Statins drugs that lower cholesterol (Lipitor, Zocor, etc.) reduce the risk of dying from heart disease, and are safe with few side effects.**

TRUTH: Not one study has ever shown that statins reduce mortality in healthy men and women with only elevated cholesterol and no history of heart disease. Not are statins effective in the elderly. Statins do reduce the risk of death in young and middle-aged males with preexisting heart disease, but the benefit is small, independent of cholesterol lowering, and comes with many side effects, complications and costs.