

Natural Ways to Keep Your Heart Healthy For Life



**Natural methods of Lowering Your Cholesterol
and Looking After Your Heart**

By Mary Ruddy

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Looking After Your Heart Starts Here...

Introduction

This report looks at the causes of heart disease and what you can do to naturally prevent the onset of this condition. With a little time and effort, everyone can increase their chances of living life to the fullest, without the need for drugs such as statins that can, over a prolonged period of time, do more harm than good.

Heart Disease Explained

A healthy heart is perhaps something of an afterthought for many people who probably only think about it when a problem has been diagnosed. Your heart is a myogenic muscle – in other words it beats on its own without the need for the brain to send messages to it.

The heart pumps blood around your body via veins and arteries. Arteries pump blood from the heart to the body, while veins carry the blood back from the body towards the heart.

When the heart becomes diseased in any way or becomes damaged, it cannot function properly and can lead to a weakening of the heart and hence problems such as angina, heart disease, heart murmur and heart attacks.

When your arteries or veins become blocked by too much fat or cholesterol (bad fat), it places additional strain on the heart. This is because the heart must work harder to pump blood through the narrowed arteries.

Too much cholesterol can also lead to a hardening of the arteries known as **atherosclerosis**. This is one of the major forms of heart disease. Left untreated, it can lead to serious damage to the heart and eventually a heart attack. In fact, over half of the deaths due to heart disease in the Western world are as a direct result of atherosclerosis.

Coronary heart disease is where the arteries which directly supply the heart become hardened with deposits of fat and cholesterol. If any of the arteries become completely blocked, then this causes a heart attack.

There are many other types of conditions which affect the heart and cause heart disease, but for the purpose of this special report, we have only mentioned those conditions which are caused by cholesterol.

Who is at Risk?

If you are worried about your heart, then it's important to know who is at risk and who is more likely to have heart disease so you can take adequate precautions to prevent long term health problems. You are at risk if you are:

- Over the age of 40
- Overweight
- Smoker
- Drinks heavily
- Does little exercise
- Has family history of heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Uncontrolled diabetes
- Men are at greater risk of heart disease than women

What Is Cholesterol?

Put simply, cholesterol is a type of fat which is produced by the liver and is needed to help the body function. However, there are two types of cholesterol. Good cholesterol (HDL cholesterol) is needed for healthy cell function and surrounds every cell in our body in minute quantities.

It is responsible for helping transport certain molecules into the cell, as well as converting sunshine into vitamin D. Without good cholesterol, we would not be able to function as well as we do. It has been shown that HDL cholesterol actively helps PREVENT diseases of the arteries. This is because it helps reduce bad cholesterol in our blood.

Bad cholesterol (LDL cholesterol) on the other hand is caused by eating the wrong types of foods, in particular foods containing saturated or solid and animal fats. Dairy products are also another cause of high cholesterol and sit in your arteries causing a build up of fatty deposits. Bad cholesterol is stored in the body and can reduce your levels of good cholesterol.

Smoking depletes your body of good cholesterol, meaning there is less good cholesterol to protect the body from bad cholesterol. Exercise also allows your body to help get rid of bad cholesterol and increase the level of good cholesterol produced by the body.

What Are Statins and What Are They Used For?

Statins are a group of drugs which are used to help lower the levels of bad cholesterol in your blood. They are prescribed by your doctor and are often taken for many years. Some people even take these for life.

Statins work by preventing the liver from producing too much cholesterol. Your body produces an enzyme which controls the production of cholesterol in the body. When you take a statin, the drug actively prevents this enzyme from working properly and therefore prevents the liver producing too much.

Different groups of people are prescribed statins because they are known as 'high-risk' patients. High risk patients are those patients who have for medical or other reasons, a greater chance of developing heart disease. Therefore, statins are given to these patients in order to prevent the onset of heart disease.

The groups of people most likely to need statins are:

- Diabetics
- Family history of heart disease and heart attacks
- Overweight people with high blood pressure
- Any disease which causes hardening or narrowing of the arteries

The Problem With Statins

Unfortunately though, over the last few years, scientific research repeatedly points to problems with side effects from statins which can cause long term health problems when used over a prolonged period of time.

Common side effects of statins include:

- Headaches
- Abdominal bloating
- Rash
- Pins and needles
- Nausea and sickness
- Diarrhoea

Major side effects of statins are liver failure and muscle damage. Not only are these serious side effects, but there are additional side effects that you should really be aware of BEFORE taking the decision to use statins to control heart disease.

In Canada, it is a legal requirement to inform patients that statins can increase the risk of heart attacks and damage to the heart muscle!

Unfortunately though, the same can't be said for the rest of the world where no such laws exist. One BIG reason for withholding this information from patients is that it would directly affect the pharmaceutical industry – those whose pockets would be hit the hardest!

In an attempt to prevent such problems, this information is withheld from patients who would, in all likelihood, stop taking these medicines.

One of the main problems with statins is that they deplete the levels of CoQ10 in the body. CoQ10 is a naturally occurring enzyme which is responsible for many functions in the body including keeping your heart pumping smoothly (remember how we mentioned that the heart is myogenic? That's due to CoQ10).

In fact, studies have confirmed that levels of CoQ10 deplete by as much as 40% when taking a statin- that's more than enough to cause significant problems within the body. CoQ10 is an anti-oxidant which protects the cells in our bodies from damage to its DNA.

In terms of heart health, CoQ10 prevents hardening of the arteries, improves high blood pressure and chest pain and also helps in maintaining regular heart rhythm. As you can imagine, a reduction in CoQ10 would mean that the body would be under additional stress of not having enough CoQ10 to protect it against heart problems.*

Because of this, it is vitally important that you look into alternative treatments to delay and prevent the onset of heart disease. Any manufactured medication will always have side effects to it.

As someone interested in maintaining a healthy drug-free lifestyle, you should also consider the information in this report carefully and use it to protect yourself from heart problems without the use of drugs.

One of the ways in which you can prevent heart disease is by increasing your good cholesterol and decreasing your bad cholesterol.

This report will show you how you can do this without the use of traditional pharmaceutical drugs.

*Sears, Al, MD, *The Doctor's Heart Cure: Discover the Simple, Easy, Enjoyable and Above-All PROVEN Plan to Lose Weight and Achieve a Shock-Proof, Disease-Resistance Heart — with Delicious, Natural Foods and Just a Few Minutes of Exercise a Day*, St. Paul: Dragon Door, 2004, 133-146.

Feed Your Heart Healthy

It's no coincidence that those people who have very healthy lifestyles and eat healthily have fewer incidences of heart disease and high cholesterol. Any diet which is loaded with dairy, fatty foods, high salt and sugar and is full of processed and junk food is a major trigger for clogged arteries and heart problems.

If you are serious about reducing your risk of heart disease and high cholesterol, you need to ensure your diet consists mostly of:

- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Salads
- Pulses
- Whole grains
- High fibre foods
- Very lean protein
- Extra Virgin Olive oil
- Oily fish such as salmon and mackerel

You should actively reduce your consumption of:

- Dairy
- Eggs
- Red meat
- Animal fats
- Sugar
- Salt
- Any processed food

A healthy heart needs pure, wholesome foods which actively benefit the body, providing key nutrients, vitamins and minerals. It's a bit of a paradox that red meat (although bad for you) contains high amounts of CoQ10 – with the most levels being found in the liver and heart.*

You should decrease red meat which is fatty – so lamb should be avoided and you should stick to very lean mutton or beef – both good sources of CoQ10. Unfortunately though, most natural foods don't contain enough CoQ10 and it may be worth considering taking a supplement for this. An interesting point to note is that frying meat actively reduces CoQ10 levels, while boiling seems to have no effect at all. **

A good idea is to therefore use meat in soups and stews which are cooked in liquids and avoid frying the meat completely.

You should also look to increase the amount of soluble fibre in your diet by increasing the amount of oats, apples and bran based foods such as low sugar bran cereals. These work by literally sticking to the bad cholesterol in your blood and flushing them out of your system.

Recently, there has been a huge trend towards increasing the awareness of a healthy heart. As a result, food manufacturers are starting to reduce the amount of saturated fat in processed foods as well as adding in fibre and whole grains into everyday items such as bread (replacing white bread with seeded wholemeal bread is one example).

There are lots of products available which actively lower cholesterol and includes probiotics yogurt drinks and special spreads for use in place of butter. These too can go a long way in improving your cholesterol levels.

Salt is one of nature's blessings and deadly mistakes too. Required for healthy cell function, salt is absolutely necessary for your cells to function properly. However, most people in the Western world are consuming far too much salt, since not only is it added to foods for flavour, but it is found in packaged foods too.

Excessive salt intake causes hypertension or high blood pressure – one of the leading causes of heart disease and strokes. ° It also causes your body to hold onto too much fluid, causing swelling and weight gain (water weight gain) which puts additional pressure on the heart.

In the UK, the Government has issued guidelines recommending no more than 6g a day. In actual fact, we consume more than 9g per day on average. Avoid

using refined table salt and stick to sea salt which has higher concentrations of other trace minerals and tastes better than table salt.

You should also avoid eating more than 2-3 eggs per week, or you could just remove the yolk, since this contains a high amount of cholesterol.

Sugar is your heart's hidden enemy – more so because most people associate sugar with being bad for your waistline and causing problems with your teeth.

The truth is that excess sugar is converted and stored in your body as fat – namely around the middle. This can cause problems with your weight and the additional fat obtained as a result of too much sugar in your blood can also block your arteries.

Avoid not only sugar, but anything which can easily be broken down into sugars in the body. This includes all carbohydrates obtained from white flour, potatoes and too much white rice.

Another thing, the body cannot function without fat in the diet completely, since vitamins A, D and E are fat soluble and need fat so they can be absorbed by the body. Fat also serves to cushion and protect internal organs, therefore we NEED fat in our diets.

Choose fats such as extra virgin olive oil, hemp oil and foods containing EFA's or essential fatty acids. Essential fatty acids are good fats which not only help your body lose weight, but help to protect your heart against the bad fats.

Foods rich in EFA's include flaxseeds, avocados, walnuts, hemp oil, olive oil, herring, mackerel, salmon, dark green leafy veg like spinach and kale, wholegrain foods and lean meats.

Foods such as oily fish should be eaten at least three times a week and contain Omega oils 3,6 and 9 – all of which have been proven to actively prevent heart disease.

Fish should be grilled or steamed, or even baked, but avoid frying fish unless you are dry-frying so that the fish cooks in its own oil.

Following the above guidelines will drastically help to lower your cholesterol and ensure your body isn't holding onto artery-blocking fat.

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**Weber et al., "The coenzyme Q10 content of the average Danish diet," *Int J Vitam Nutr Res*. Vol. 67 No. 2 (1997) 123-129.

°Hanneman R. Intersalt: hypertension rise with age revisited. *BMJ* May 18 1996:312, 1283-1289

Lose Weight For Good

It's a sad fact that in the western world, heart disease is rife and is usually because we eat too much of the wrong foods. In short, people die as a result of eating too much. By complete contrast, people in the third world die of starvation.

Whatever your reasons for losing weight, put your health and your heart first. The previous chapter has already pointed out which foods should be eaten and what should be avoided. Now you need to take it one step further and control your portion sizes and change your cooking techniques too.

Never EVER fry food or add in additional fat unless you are using tiny amounts of olive oil. The less fat you use the better. Think roasting, baking, steaming, boiling, sautéing, stir-frying and grilling. As long as additional fat is kept to the barest minimum, there should not be a problem.

A health grill can go a long way to help control your weight, since food cooks thoroughly between two super heated non-stick plates. This removes the need for additional fat in the cooking process.

You can buy oil sprays which you can use to lightly mist food, ensuring it stays moist and doesn't burn. Steaming is a great way to cook meat as it keeps it juicy, and stir frying veg in toasted sesame oil is delicious and helps retain much of the nutrients.

Portion control should be exercised at every point possible – this is true regardless of whether you eat in or out. Use your closed fist as a guide. This gives you a rough idea of the size of one portion. Use the guideline of one portion of protein and two of veg or one salad and one veg when eating.

You could simplify it even more by using a small side plate to eat from rather than a dinner plate. This ensures that you eat smaller amounts of food which automatically restricts your calories and means you can control food servings easily.

Used in conjunction with healthy cooking methods, portion control is a GREAT way to lose weight long term without going on a calorie or carb-counting diet.

Always eat slowly and drink at least one large glass of water with your meal to increase the feeling of being full. Never go back for seconds and this will eventually train your stomach into wanting less food.

Exercise is key to a healthy heart and one of the best forms of exercise out there is brisk walking. Requiring only a sensible pair of running or walking shoes, walking is a low-impact exercise which helps to lower your blood pressure, works your entire body, burns fat and strengthens your heart muscles without stress.

Choose exercises that get your heart rate up to a comfortable level. If you have a LOT of weight to lose, walking is probably the easiest and safest place to start. Activities such as swimming are good for those of you who find walking too much – especially for people with joint pains or at least 4 stones to lose.

Other than direct exercise, look to increasing your daily activities. If you have a desk job then you should get up and walk up and down the stairs a few times every hour, or walk around the house several times. Walk wherever you can and get off one stop early when taking the bus.

Your BMI and Heart Health

Doctors often use something called a BMI or body mass index measurement to check your mass or body weight in comparison to your height. A sensible BMI is between 18-25. Under 18 means you are underweight and over 25 means you are overweight.

Anything over 30 classifies you as obese. You can check your BMI here:

<http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/>

The only problem with BMI is that although it is a good indication of your weight, it doesn't take into account your body frame or your muscle mass – body builders for example, often have a BMI over 30, but are certainly NOT overweight – their excess weight comes from muscle.

A better indicator of heart disease is your waist measurement instead of your BMI. Most doctors suggest your optimal waist size should be under 37 inches (84 cm) for men and 32 inches (81 cm) for women.

As a rough idea, a 14 cm increase in waist size corresponds to around a 30% increase in the risk of developing heart disease. That's because fat around your middle put you at a greater risk of heart disease than fat around your buttocks and thighs.

Taking these factors into consideration, you should maintain a healthy weight and do so for the sake of your health first and foremost. Being overweight is not good for your heart and the additional strain can make you out of breath and lethargic – triggering a dangerous cycle of not moving because of lack of energy which in turns makes you put even more weight on.

By working out on a daily basis, you ensure that you keep your heart healthy for much longer. Aim for at least 20-30 minute daily sessions of walking or other forms of cardiovascular exercise.

Cardiovascular exercise is so called because it works your heart and your vascular system (veins and arteries). Other than keeping your weight in check, it can also help prevent other problems such as diabetes and stroke.

Change Your Lifestyle

Your lifestyle plays a HUGE role in your heart health. Apart from eating healthily and exercising, you should aim to change these factors in your daily life:

- Stress
- Lack of sleep
- Too much alcohol
- Smoking

Stress plays a huge role in affecting heart disease, and in fact, many heart attacks are brought on from prolonged stress or sudden shock which cause high blood pressure and eventually damage to the heart muscle.

Sleep too is a serious indicator in heart disease, although this is still being speculated by some specialists. When you don't get enough sleep, your body produces a hormone called grehlin which causes you to become hungry.

Sleep deprivation also decreases the amount of the hormone leptin in the body – the hormone responsible for telling your body that it is full. An increase in grehlin and a decrease in leptin makes for a wider waistline – which in turn causes a strain on the heart. You should aim for a minimum of 6 hours shut eye every night. Studies have found that less than 5 hours sleep a night is enough to trigger substantial weight gain.

Alcohol abuse is a prime cause in heart disease. In fact, drinking more than three units daily is toxic to the heart, increases blood pressure and can lead to an enlarged and weakened heart. There is evidence that a glass of red wine can protect heart health, but as the saying goes, too much of anything is bad for you. The best advice is to go teetotal.

Smoking causes a narrowing of the arteries, causes clots to become more likely, weakens blood vessels and raises your blood pressure. Cutting out cigarettes altogether is the best way to increase your longevity and prevent an additional risk to your heart.

The Role Of Supplements and Heart Disease

Certain supplements are beneficial in helping to maintain a healthy heart. For example, omega oil supplements directly affect the heart by preventing abnormal heartbeats. They also decrease your blood pressure, prevent atherosclerosis and decrease triglyceride levels in the blood.

Triglycerides are the chemical form of most fats in your body, and can be caused by consuming too much fat or carbohydrates. Raised triglycerides can also cause diabetes, so excess fat and carbohydrates should be reduced drastically from your daily diet.

Psyllium is a form of fibre that can be added to cereals and mixed in a drink to increase the amount of fibre in your diet. This helps stick to bad cholesterol and actively flushes it out of your system. Having a Psyllium drink daily can increase fibre in your diet and decrease cholesterol which can lead to heart disease.

Natural Vitamin E used in conjunction with CoQ10 is perfect for reducing inflammation of the heart. The CoQ10 is helpful for increasing the strength of the heart muscle, since this is what controls the heart rhythm.

Adding turmeric to your food (this is often added to curries) is very good for your health, since turmeric helps to soothe inflammation and heal the body. Other herbs good for the heart include the use of garlic which prevents thickening of the blood and hence prevents the formation of clots.

Hawthorn is a very gentle herb which has been proven to be beneficial to the heart. Hawthorn not only helps to strengthen the heart muscle, but also improves the circulation. It's a safe, gentle herb with great benefits.

Conclusion

In this special report, we discussed different ways to help treat heart disease, with an emphasis on reducing the levels of bad cholesterol in the body. Heart disease is affected by many different factors such as age, genetics, diet and lifestyle.

By decreasing the levels of bad cholesterol in the blood, you significantly increase the chances of improving your heart health. Heart health is often the last thing we focus on as part of a healthy lifestyle, but is in fact, the most important part.

Simple changes to your diet and lifestyle will go a long way in helping your heart to become stronger and increase the chances of fighting off long term heart problems. Supplementing your diet with herbs and natural supplements should be seen as additional preventative measures which can further help prevent serious long term problems and heart attacks.

To find out more about how you can resolve your cholesterol problems and strengthen your heart, please turn over for more advice.

Here's to your heart health,

Mary Ruddy

<http://www.howtolowercholesterolwithoutmedication.org/>

Recommendations For Helping To Maintain Heart Health

In this short report, you have learnt some easy lifestyle and dietary changes that you can implement to help increase your vitality and reduce your risk of heart disease.

I also mentioned the role of supplementation and how this can help to maintain a healthy lifestyle. For those of you looking for a little extra help to lower your cholesterol and give you an even better chance of fighting off heart disease, [Xtend Life' Cholest-Natural](#) is the perfect supplement to take.

Cholest-Natural is an all natural herbal supplement containing rice bran oil, pumpkin seed oil and vitamin E oil – all of which play a crucial role in lowering your bad cholesterol and raising your good cholesterol levels. Think of it as a balancing act for the fats in your body.

Taken in conjunction with a healthy lifestyle, Cholest-Natural has been shown to help:

- Reduce levels of bad cholesterol
- Raise levels of good cholesterol
- Reduce inflammation in the blood
- Maintain good heart health
- Reduce or even eliminate the need for statins
- Improve your memory
- Maintain overall good cardiovascular health

In addition to Cholest-Natural, fish oils have been clinically proven to help lower your cholesterol and reduce inflammation and clotting in the blood. A product such as [Xtend-Life's Omega 3/DHA Fish Oil](#) is perfect for using in conjunction with Cholest-Natural to further prevent the build up of bad cholesterol and help maintain healthy heart function.

Fish oils (in particular omega 3 oils) have been recommended by the American Heart Association as helping to actively lower bad cholesterol – a primary indicator in heart disease. Taking [Xtend-Life's Omega 3/DHA Fish Oil](#) with your

daily dose of Cholest-Natural and even on its own has been shown to have a profound effect on the occurrence of heart disease.

If you suffer from additional complications such as high blood pressure, you may want to consider the addition of [Xtend-Life's Cardio-Klenze](#) which has been found to improve circulation and reduce your blood pressure. This makes it perfectly suited to taking with Cholest-Natural as a complete solution to maintain the health of your circulation system and your heart, as well as reducing your blood pressure and preventing high cholesterol.

If you have a family history of these conditions, you should take extra precautions. With careful consideration and the go ahead from your Doctor, you may be able to completely reduce or even stop taking statins permanently.

Remember, a healthy heart is as a result of a healthy lifestyle, and supplementation can really help increase the quality of your life. All Xtend-Life's products are completely natural and have no reported side effects.

Here's to your heart health,

Mary Rudd

<http://www.howtolowercholesterolwithoutmedication.org/>