

A Closer Look at Cholesterol & Statin Drugs - Part 1

By Toni Eatros, MS, Dipl Ac, AP

We see ads for cholesterol lowering drugs every time we turn on the television. Most people know exactly what their cholesterol levels are. Big Pharma has successfully marketed the message to physicians and the public, that, in order to lower risk for developing heart disease, nearly everyone needs to take drugs to lower their cholesterol levels. This article will offer an alternative viewpoint of the cholesterol message. High cholesterol is NOT the cause of heart disease, inflammation is. Cholesterol will be addressed in this two part article. Be sure to watch for part two next month and the heart disease and inflammation article coming soon.

What is Cholesterol?

There are five major functions of cholesterol in the body:

-- Cholesterol is the fat-like substance that exists in every cell of the body. In fact, life itself is not possible without adequate amounts of cholesterol in our bodies.

-- Cholesterol is necessary for the proper digestion and absorption of fats, fat soluble vitamins and minerals. Cholesterol is the main ingredient of bile salts. If enough bile salt is not present, there will be a subsequent deficiency of the fat soluble vitamins A, D, E and K. These vitamin deficiencies are very common today as a result of the use of statin drugs. Many diseases are linked to a vitamin D deficiency, compromised immune function, osteoporosis, and breast, colon and prostate cancers. It is nearly impossible to maintain optimal Vitamin D levels if using a statin drug or if cholesterol levels are lower than 160mg/dl.

-- Optimal function of the brain and nervous system are dependent on the presence of cholesterol. It is critical to proper brain and memory function.

-- Cholesterol is critical for the immune system to fight against infection. Studies have shown that men with lowered cholesterol levels have fewer circulating lymphocytes, total T-cells, and helper

T-cells as compared to men with higher cholesterol levels. There is a strong association between lower cholesterol levels and an increased risk of being hospitalized for an infectious disease.

-- Cholesterol is a precursor to the production of all the adrenal hormones. Adequate cholesterol levels must be maintained to produce optimal amounts of these adrenal hormones and maintain a balanced hormonal system.

What Are Statin Drugs?

Statin are cholesterol lowering drugs that poison the HMG-CoA Reductase enzyme in the body, thus interfering with the making of cholesterol, and Coenzyme Q10. These drugs are effective in lowering cholesterol, but as you will read, that is not always the most desired result, especially in the elderly.

What Are the Side Effects of Cholesterol Reducing Drugs/Statin?

-- **Heart Failure:** Research has shown that "statins can cause a dose-related depletion in an essential nutrient known as Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10). The heart is especially susceptible because it uses so much energy." Due to the poisoned HMG-CoA Reductase enzyme, the CoQ10 production is inhibited in addition to the production of cholesterol. This reduction in CoQ10 in the body, of which the heart muscle contains the largest concentration, leads to muscle aches and pains throughout the body and may lead to congestive heart failure. Researchers at East Texas Medical Center studied 20 patients with normal heart function. After six months of taking Lipitor, 66% developed problems with the diastole, or filling phase, of the heart pumping cycle. This is the same problem many congestive heart failure patients have. Knowing this, doesn't it seem wise to supplement CoQ10 if you decide to take a statin medication? If taking a statin, the recommended CoQ10 daily dose is 150-300mg.



-- **Body Aches & Pains:** This is the most common side effect experienced by those taking statin medications. This is likely due to the decrease in CoQ10 available in the body, as mentioned above. These pains typical resolve when the medication is stopped.

-- **Brain Fog & Dementia:** Over half of the dry weight of the thinking part of the brain is cholesterol. Adequate cholesterol levels are necessary for proper brain function.

-- **Cancer:** All of the cholesterol drugs have been associated with an increased rate of cancer. Breast cancer rates in humans that took these medications have been shown to increase by a relative risk of 1200%. The exact mechanism is not yet clear, as many studies have not lasted for long enough periods of time.

-- **Depression:** As mentioned earlier, too little cholesterol can disrupt the adrenal hormones. When there is hormone imbalance in the body, depression often becomes an issue. If a patient is already depressed, the introduction of statin drugs can exacerbate the depression. Low levels of cholesterol also inhibit serotonin receptors from properly functioning.

-- **Diabetes:** New research is starting to link the use of statin drugs to blood sugar regulation issues and the onset of diabetes.



Where Does the Cholesterol Myth Originate From?

Ansel Keys, MD published a paper that reported a link between dietary fat intake and the development of coronary heart disease. He published data, after World War II, comparing the rates of heart disease versus the fat intake in the diet of six western countries. This information has been made available to every medical student since its publication. At first glance, it appears as if there is a direct relationship between the increased intake of fat in the diet and the increased mortality of heart disease. From that moment on, conventional medicine has been fixated with the idea that high cholesterol levels lead to heart disease.

However, when the study is looked at more closely, the relationship between dietary fat and heart disease suddenly is not so clear. Dr Keys actually studied the relationship between dietary fat and heart disease in a total of 22 countries. In fact, further analysis of his data shows that Dr Keys had cherry-picked the data that supported the link between dietary fat and heart disease. He only chose those countries that supported his hypothesis. Over the past 50 years, Western medicine has been mistakenly obsessed with the idea that dietary fat and cholesterol is the cause of heart disease.

If the above correlation is correct, shouldn't we have a healthier, happier population that is living longer? What, in fact, has changed over this 50 year period of medicating a large percent of the population and claiming fat is evil? Just look around, we have an obese population suffering from the ravages of heart disease. In fact, heart disease is still the number one cause of death in the U.S. Americans are the heaviest people on the planet and chronic illness is rampant. Maybe the advice we have been given all these years is not correct.


It is time to stop and take a look at the quality of the information that has bombarded us from all directions for way too long. Are the people around you taking these medications and feeling vibrant, healthy and alive or are they chronically ill, unable to enjoy life to its fullest? As Dr David Brownstein repeatedly says in his books, "You cannot poison a receptor or a crucial enzyme system in the body for the long-term and expect a good result."

If you are looking for different answers and approaches to your health and want to resolve chronic illness, call today, **239-260-4566**. Acupuncture & Natural Health Solutions has a variety of treatment options ready to be customized to fit your individual needs. For more information visit our website, www.AcupunctureSolutionsOnline.com. Be sure to stay tuned next month for part 2 of A Closer Look at Cholesterol & Statin Drugs.

Article references are available upon request.


*Yours In Health & Wellness,
Toni L. Eatros, AP*

Bonita Periodontics and Implants



Juan M. Teodoro, D.M.D.

- Diplomate American Board of Periodontology
- Diplomate & Fellow International Congress of Oral Implantologists
- Clinical Assistant Professor University of Florida
- Conscious Intravenous Sedation Certified
- Laser Assisted New Attachment Procedure Certified



**Implants • Bone Grafting • Wisdom Teeth
IV & Oral Sedation • Extractions • Gum Grafts**

Bonita Springs:
9510 Bonita Beach Road, Suite 102
Bonita Springs, Florida 34135

239.333.4343
www.bonitaimplants.com



Acupuncture & Natural Health Solutions

Pediatric • Adult • Senior Acupuncture

Acupuncture Effectively Treats:

- Back Pain • Neck Pain • Headaches
- Sports Injuries • Chronic Pain • Anxiety and much more...

Toni Eatros, Acupuncture Physician

14 Years of experience and expansive medical knowledge.

Call NOW To Schedule An Appointment
239-260-4566
www.AcupunctureSolutionsOnline.com

TIRED OF MANAGING PAIN WITH MEDICATION?
See what acupuncture can do for you.