

## Controlling Cholesterol

Cholesterol has become the focus of a great deal of attention in the modern medical world. Many people have thought that cholesterol is something that signifies a tendency towards coronary artery disease and heart disease. It is generally assumed that it is very difficult to bring cholesterol down if elevated and that a statin drug would need to be employed to accomplish the reduction. There are a number of factors that should be considered when it comes to considering cholesterol balance.

The original study of cholesterol during the 1960's on a proxy 240,000 subjects, found that cholesterol readings above 300 were directly associated with an increased risk of heart disease. What is also reported in the same study is that cholesterol of less than 130 is directly associated with an increased risk of cancer.

At first it was thought that cholesterol came from animal foods and fats that were consumed in the diet, yet later we discovered that two-thirds of the body's cholesterol is actually made in the liver. Today, with our new understanding about the impact of carbohydrates and high glycemic diets it is revealed that elevated triglyceride levels result in a downstream effect of elevated cholesterol. Chemically, three triglyceride molecules bolt together to constitute a cholesterol molecule so, when triglycerides are high they automatically cascade downstream into high cholesterol.

While lab values for the common American are said to be normal if under 200 or 150, the truth is that any triglyceride level above 90 will result in a correlated elevation of cholesterol. Oftentimes simply by limiting the glycemic sugar intake in the diet the triglycerides will fall. If the triglycerides are under 90 and the cholesterol continues to be elevated, it often suggests the possibility of some food allergy slowing the digestive process resulting in excess cholesterol resorption from the gut. The most common food allergy in this situation is eggs and approximately 30 percent of the population is allergic to eggs. So, if eggs are the culprit and you eliminate them and reduce your glycemic intake the cholesterol naturally moves towards optimum levels. It is relatively simple to limit the glycemic index in the diet and see the triglycerides fall and subsequently see the cholesterol normalize. I have found in practice that we can often control our own chemical imbalances without having to use drugs. In practice and demonstrated with lab work, these triglyceride and cholesterol imbalances can be affected profoundly within 21 days through diet alone.

HDL cholesterol (high-density lipoprotein) is another consideration. HDL's are able to help transport cholesterol through the blood and keep it from plaquing (attaching) to the arterial wall called hardening of the arteries. HDL's can be increased through exercise and through certain nutrients including red wine. Today, another factor to consider is the level of Homocysteine protein in the blood that acts as Velcro to attach the plaque to the arterial wall. Although normal levels allow a reading of up to 12-15, it is optimally recommended that Homocysteine be kept under 7. Interestingly enough, Homocysteine is a purely nutritional event and if it is elevated simply adding vitamins B6, B12 and folic acid usually will return it to an optimal level. Homocysteine is a very good predictor of heart attack risk. Another factor that has been considered to influence arterial wall plaquing is C-reactive protein (CRP). CRP represents a state of inflammation in the body and therefore the subsequent stickiness of the arterial wall. By keeping our body free of chronic infection and immune system burdens, especially allergies, the C-reactive protein will fall to <.04 and there is very little likelihood that plaquing will occur.

There are multiple factors that influence the lipid profile of our blood. A few of them have been outlined above so that a person can begin to understand that each of us can have an influence in controlling our blood profile. It is encouraging to find that you can be in control of your chemistry rather than the genes you inherited determining your destiny. Many people have been skeptical to believe how quickly the lipid profile could be optimized, and many have chosen not to try. When we say that it is possible to see profound change within 21 days, I hope you will be encouraged to try rather than considering medication you're only alternative for the rest of your life.