

HEART DISEASE - THE REAL SKINNY ON FATS – PART I

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I want to begin talking about heart disease, nutrition, cholesterol, and all that goes with that, including the ill effects – in some cases devastating – I have observed in clients as a result of statin-drug use. Statin drugs are those pharmaceutical agents that inhibit the production of cholesterol by the liver. I have been absolutely itching to get to this subject because it is one that is so very misunderstood and because the result of that misunderstanding can ruin your health for decades and even be deadly.

In this series I want to reveal the truth about what cholesterol actually is and why we are more sickly when it is in short supply and dead without it. I want to talk about the actual role of cholesterol – or lack thereof – in the development of heart disease. I want to talk about how wear and tear from a continuously pumping system and inflammation cause arterial damage and how those factors encourage the formation of plaque in a life-saving effort to keep the tissue from tearing – think of the boy with his finger in the dike! One source puts it this way: to dissolve arterial plaque without healing the artery is like pulling a scab off a wound. Another comments that blaming heart disease on cholesterol is like blaming the presence of the firemen for the fire! Hmm... well that's another way of looking at things, now isn't it?

Cholesterol, by the way, comprises a very small percentage of atherosclerotic plaque, but we'll get there. We're going to take this slow, because my goal is to arm you with all of the information necessary to help you prevent or defeat heart disease and to keep yourself from the health-debilitating effects of the current "standard of care."

The first thing I want to talk about is cholesterol. Let me start by saying that cholesterol is your friend, not your enemy. Without cholesterol there is no life whatsoever. In the hormonal cascade, cholesterol sits at the very top, followed by pregnenolone, dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA), and then all of the sex hormones; progesterone, estrogen, testosterone (notice anything different in your nightlife since starting statin therapy?), the mineralocorticoid hormones aldosterone and corticosterone, and the glucocorticoid hormone cortisone. In addition, cholesterol is critical to the formation of Vitamin D (actually *not* a vitamin at all but a hormone) and to the production of bile, which aids in the digestion of fats. Furthermore, cholesterol in your brain is key to the cell connections needed for memory and learning.

It is well established – though not well published – that people with higher levels of cholesterol live longer than those with low cholesterol levels and have less incidence of death due to any cause, including heart disease. Low total cholesterol levels are associated with an increased risk of cancer, as the immune system wears down. The Vitamin-D factor alone is huge. Vitamin D is a potent antioxidant and has been found to be very important in preventing and addressing cancer, *especially* the most deadly form of skin cancer, melanoma! Here's a Vitamin-D tangent: Do you know that our most crucial source of Vitamin D is sunlight?... That without adequate levels of cholesterol our skin cannot produce Vitamin D in response to exposure to ultraviolet radiation? Do you

think that it might just be possible that so many are walking the “dusty road to death” via cancer, osteoporosis, etc., is because we are constantly encouraged to avoid the sun and/or slather on sunscreen, while at the same time lowering our cholesterol level? Vitamin D is crucial to a healthy serotonin level (serotonin is a neurotransmitter key to mood), and I believe we see so much “seasonal affective disorder” (SAD) depression here in New England because we simply do not get enough sun. Hey, there’s another thing I want to tell you about... in our environment teeming with synthetic, toxic estrogens, did you know that sunscreens contain a chemical that very closely mimics estrogen and is absorbed through your skin every time you use them? “No way!... isn’t *someone* supposed to *warn* us about these things?!!”

Well... enough for this time. I hope this little intro whets your appetite for more. I’ll give you a hint in case you’re tempted to just blow me off when it comes to this subject. Cholesterol levels are seen to be elevated in 5% of heart attack cases. These cases are in the young-to-middle-age-men. There is an intriguing and scientifically plausible explanation for this, which I can’t wait to share with you.

I hope you don't mind that I didn't leave you with references. For anyone interested, however, please feel free to call me, and I'll be more than happy to talk with you and provide what you are looking for. I promise, I'm not making this stuff up!