

The Full Story of Cholesterol Lowering Drugs

Cholesterol lowering drugs is not the first step to fight heart disease. The optimum way to get and remain healthy is through nutrition. NOT nutrition plus pharmaceutical drugs--but nutrition alone. Nutrition should be obtained from whole, natural foods as much as possible. This is food as found in nature. As Hippocrates so wisely stated, "Let food be thy medicine."

The number one killer of Americans today is heart disease. This fact has led medical researchers into seeking the cause, and the remedy for that cause. Sadly, after many studies, mainstream medicine has made up its mind about the cause. High cholesterol has been named the culprit. Of course the pharmaceutical companies' answer is cholesterol lowering drugs.

Now is a good time to state what cholesterol IS NOT. There is no such thing as LDL cholesterol and HDL cholesterol. There is JUST cholesterol. LDL stands for low-density lipoprotein; HDL stands for high-density lipoprotein. 'Lipo' means lipid or fat. Low-density is a combination of fat and protein which is transported by the blood.

The common misunderstanding about cholesterol would mean that there are two cholesterols. Or that there are two types of cholesterol. Neither one is true.

Because of the marketing and educational campaigns of the powerful pharmaceutical industry, cholesterol has been presented as practically evil. Don't underestimate the power of the pharmaceutical industry. They set the standards for and educate the medical profession. Their very, very deep pockets control both the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and our healthcare system.

The pharmaceutical industry has invented cholesterol lowering drugs (statins) to control cholesterol levels. But they first invented a disease which they could control by drugs. This disease is called hypercholesterolemia. Hypercholesterolemia is defined as: 'the presence of abnormal amounts of cholesterol in cells of the body and in the plasma of blood; it is associated with risk of atherosclerosis.'

I should mention that there is no physical sign from anyone suffering from hypercholesterolemia, or too much cholesterol in the blood. As a matter of fact, people with high cholesterol feel great.

Throughout the years what is considered high levels of cholesterol has changed. Twenty-five to thirty years ago if you were a middle-aged male and your cholesterol was greater than 240, and there were other risk factors, you were a candidate for drugs. After the Cholesterol Consensus Conference of 1984, anyone with cholesterol greater than 200 was a candidate. Now if your cholesterol is over 180, you are a candidate for a cholesterol lowering drug.

The latest recommendation about cholesterol levels is that they should be as low as possible. This eliminates it being done by exercise, diet, or any lifestyle change. You must take a statin (cholesterol lowering drug.) Not surprisingly, eight of the nine panelists were on the payroll of a pharmaceutical company.

Coincidentally, each revision made more people candidates for the pharmaceutical companies' cholesterol lowering drugs. These drugs are known as statins. The primary job of statins is to inhibit the production of cholesterol in the body.

The total cholesterol readings that you normally get from your doctor are practically worthless. I read of a doctor who knew a 39-year old woman who had a total cholesterol reading of 125 mg/dL. Naturally her doctor thought she was in great health.

However, this woman's HDL, the good cholesterol, was only 15 mg/dL. The HDL should be at least 40 mg/dL for men and 50 mg/dL for women. Obviously this woman's reading was much too low. She later developed coronary heart disease.

Cholesterol lowering drugs only lower LDL. Therefore they could not be of use to this woman who had low HDL.

The total cholesterol reading so common in mainstream or traditional medicine is composed of the combined readings of HDL, LDL (the bad cholesterol), and VLDL (very-low-density lipoprotein.) VLDL is just as bad as LDL because high levels have been linked to heart disease.

The body produces cholesterol. If it didn't, life would not exist. Cholesterol:

- * makes our cells waterproof
- * is used for cellular repair
- * forms bile salts which are necessary for the digestion of fat
- * is a precursor (a substance from which another substance is made) for vitamin D (in other words, without cholesterol, the body could not make vitamin D)
- * is an antioxidant (See...)
- * is necessary for proper neurological function
- * is a precursor for all hormones produced in the adrenal cortex

A recent study performed by researchers at Texas A&M University showed that cholesterol is important for muscle strength. Study participants were 55 men and women between the ages of 60 and 69 years of age who exercised three days a week for twelve weeks.

The study revealed that the participants who had the highest levels of dietary cholesterol experienced the most strength gains. Lower cholesterol levels reduced muscle strength. According to the researchers, "Our findings show that the restricting of cholesterol--while in the process of exercising--appears to affect building muscle mass in a negative manner."

"...Nowhere is the failing of our medical system more evident than in the wholesale acceptance of cholesterol reduction as a way to prevent disease--have all these doctors forgotten what they learned in biochemistry 101 about the many roles of cholesterol in the human biochemistry?" (Mary G. Enig, PhD.)

Low cholesterol levels interfere with the production of bile salt. People on statins can experience

difficulties digesting fats. This presents another set of problems. Naturally the pharmaceutical giants such as Pfizer (Lipitor) would like to keep the public ignorant to the possible dangers of cholesterol lowering drugs.

Cholesterol is as important for the body as is water and blood. But cholesterol lowering drugs or statins are the pharmaceutical companies' **BIGGEST SELLING DRUGS OF ALL TIME!** Currently 16 million Americans take the statin Lipitor. Lipitor, made by the pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, is the best-selling statin on the market.

Other cholesterol lowering drugs include Zocor (Merck), Pravachol (Bristol-Myers Squibb), Lescol (Novartis), Meracor (Merck), and Crestor (AstraZeneca.) Not satisfied, the pharmaceutical industry says that an additional 36 million Americans are candidates for statins! A couple of years ago, the sale of statins brought the pharmaceutical industry \$12.5 billion!

Statin drugs are very expensive. Their cost ranges anywhere from \$900 to \$1,400 per year. This breaks down to \$75 to \$117 per month.

Cholesterol lowering drugs are not without side effects. A 1999 study performed at St. Thomas' Hospital in London found that 36% of their patients taking Lipitor's highest dose reported side effects. At its lowest dose, 10% of the patients reported side effects. The most common side effect is muscle pain and weakness. This is most likely due to coenzyme Q10 depletion. Coenzyme Q10 is important because it supports muscle function.

Lipitor has the following disclaimer in fine print: "has not been shown to prevent heart disease or heart attack!" Remember, it is the pharmaceutical companies' contention that high cholesterol is responsible for heart disease!

In summary, cholesterol is important for overall health. The body produces it. Artificially and arbitrarily lowering cholesterol levels is harmful. Remember, statins deplete the body of coenzyme Q10. This enzyme is necessary in order for muscles to function. The heart is a muscle. The heart muscle requires large amounts of coenzyme Q10 to work.

Despite protestations to the contrary by the pharmaceutical industry, diet and exercise are beneficial. Note the following nutritional plan:

- * avoid all trans fats
- * take cod liver oil (a good source of vitamins A, D, and EPA)
- * eat plenty of saturated fat (encourages production of anti-inflammatory prostaglandins)
- * take evening primrose, borage or black currant oil
- * eat foods high in copper, especially liver
- * avoid refined sugars, especially fructose
- * eat coconut oil and coconut products
- * avoid reduced fat milks, powdered milk products such as whey

Myth: LDL (low density lipoprotein), also known as 'bad' cholesterol, is the single biggest factor in the development of heart disease.

Truth: the true determining factor is the ratio of your total cholesterol to your HDL (high density lipoprotein) or 'good' cholesterol. The pharmaceutical companies promote the LDL cholesterol lie because their statin drugs work by lowering LDL cholesterol.

Documents which are posted on the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) website say that studies conducted by Merck and Schering-Plough suggest that the drug Zetia could pose risks for the liver. The studies indicated that Zetia, a non-statin drug, could cause liver damage when used long-term and combined with statins such as Lipitor, Crestor, or Zocor. Merck and Schering-Plough never published the studies.

Merck and Schering-Plough were criticized for not publishing data from another study. This study known as Enhance revealed that patients were dropped when tests discovered that their liver enzymes were elevated. Elevated enzymes are a possible sign of liver damage.

Zetia was approved by the FDA in 2002. However, one FDA reviewer warned that animal studies had shown liver damage when Zetia was combined with statins. Millions of Americans combine statin and non-statin drugs in an effort to control their cholesterol. Some people take Vytorin which combines Zetia with Zocor in a single pill.