



NATUROPATHIC WISDOM NOTES

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I love my fate to the very core and rind

Henry David Thoreau

This quote sums it up for me. If we realize that at the root of health is a sense of contentment, that everything is in its just and right place and that there is an order to the universe. All we need to do is to tune in, be patient, and don't worry be happy! The best thing we can do for our heart health is to love ourselves and our lives to the very core and rind. This means learning and following our "bliss" and into each day do one small thing that we love to do. By paying attention to Mother Nature as she brings into our lives the newness of spring with blooming flowers, song birds, the chorus of frogs and more light, we are on a sort of pilgrimage.

We are also preparing to move in the next few months but don't have an exact date as of yet. Our new address will be The Chateau Building, #300-1170 Shoppers Row, V9W 2C8. Our phone numbers stay the same. I am also in the process of hiring a new staff member. Bonnie is no longer with us. We appreciate your patience while we train a new office assistant. Enjoy the longer days of Spring!

Cardiovascular Disease (CVD)

Cardiovascular diseases are defined as diseases and injuries of the cardiovascular system: the heart, the blood vessels of the heart, and the system of blood vessels (veins and arteries) throughout the body and within the brain. Stroke is the result of a blood flow problem in the brain. It is considered a form of cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular disease accounts for the death of more Canadians than any other disease. In 2002 (the latest year for which Statistics Canada has data), cardiovascular disease accounted for 74,6261 Canadian deaths.

32% of all male deaths in Canada in 2002 were due to heart diseases, diseases of the blood vessels and stroke. For women, the toll was even higher – 34% of all female deaths in 2002 were due to cardiovascular disease.

Symptoms

Leg Pain: This can relate to PAD, Peripheral Arterial Disease, with complications of blood clots (thrombosis) and hardening of the arteries. Blockage of leg arteries leading to calf pain is a common symptom of thrombosis. These patients are six times more likely to die from CVD within 10 years and of adults over 50

years of age, 12-17% are estimated to have PAD. Treatment is with blood thinners, controlling blood pressure, blood sugar and cessation of smoking.

Risk Factors

1. **Hypertension:** elevated blood pressures over 135/85 increases the risk of CVD. For every 10 millimetre reduction in systolic blood pressure ie from 140-130, there is a 12% reduction in diabetes complications including progression of kidney disease. This is also true for lowering the risk of stroke and heart attack.
2. **Cholesterol:** lowered HDL (good cholesterol) and increased LDL (bad cholesterol) greatly increases the risk of CVD. The optimal ratio of Total chol/HDL is 3.0. Oxidation of LDL cholesterol is another risk to CVD.
3. **hsCRP highly sensitive C reactive protein** is a measure of inflammation in the body. This may relate to any inflammation be it joints, brain or heart. If the result is over 1-3 for a long period of time the risk of CVD increases. Statin drugs do lower CRP, however good nutrition also includes adequate vitamin C, EFA's, and enzymes such as bromelain.
4. **Homocysteine(Hcy):** is a protein in the blood and if in greater levels of 5-6, increases risk for CVD, diabetes, osteoporosis, Alzheimer's, stroke and other diseases such as Parkinson's. Adequate intake of Vitamin B6, B12, betaine and folic acid will normalize this level in most cases. Alcohol, cigarettes, under active thyroid, some drugs and coffee increase Hcy levels.
5. **Diabetes or Insulin Resistance (IR):** This can be confusing because the risk of CVD can be high even though diabetes has not been diagnosed yet. IR is diagnosed if three of the following risk factors are present: elevated CRP (greater than 1.0), elevated Hcy greater than 6, HDL less than 1.03mmol/L (men) and 1.29 mmol/L (women), elevated triglycerides over 1.7 mmol/L, increased waist circumference: women 35 inches, men 40 inches, increased blood pressure greater than 135/85, increased fasting blood sugars greater than 6.1, increased HgA1c over 5.5. Diabetes increases the risk of CVD by 2-5 times.

Goals of Treatment:

1. Lower LDL cholesterol to less than 3.0
2. Lower Total Chol/HDL ratio to 3-3.5
3. Lower Triglycerides (TG) to 1.5
4. TG/HDL ratio less than 3.5

5. Keep fasting blood sugar 4.5-5.3
6. HbA1C 5-5.5 (average of blood over 3 month period)
7. Lower CRP to 1.0
8. Lower homocysteine to 5-6
9. Ferritin (iron stores) 50-200
10. Uric acid (inflammatory marker) less than 300
11. Keep blood pressure 110/70 to 135/85. High blood pressure first thing in morning is a larger risk factor than higher readings during the day.
12. Keep heart rate 60-80 beats per minute
13. Waist circumference for women less than 35 inches and for men less than 40 inches.

Treatment

Diet: To lower cholesterol and triglycerides requires lowering not only the bad trans fats as well as fats in general but also carbohydrates even those that aren't sweet!

EFA's (Essential fats): Carlson Cod liver oil is my favorite source of EPA and DHA. They not only lower LDL cholesterol and triglycerides but prevent arrhythmias, decrease platelet stickiness (which promotes clot formation), reduces inflammation, decreases blood pressure and enhances insulin metabolism.

Celery is a natural source of potassium and lowers blood pressure.

Garlic is a natural blood thinner and will lower blood pressure as well.

Drinking a **glass of red wine** has the same protective effect as taking vitamin C or purple grape juice daily. The liver and addiction stress may out weigh the benefits to heart disease.

Fiber such as psillium or flaxseeds help to eliminate excess cholesterol through the bowel.

Greens drinks and eating 5 cups of organic fruits and vegetables provide the much needed anti-oxidants to reduce risk. Statin drugs such as simvastatin lower levels of vitamin E and beta carotene in the body as well as interfering with insulin metabolism. Some statins also interfere with cognition.

Lifestyle

Exercise: The simplest form is walking 30 minutes 3-5 times per week. Once you are in the habit, increase this by adding a few hills and free weights.

Sleep: It is important that sleep is of a good quality. Restless leg syndrome, sleep apnea and just not getting enough increase the risk of cardiac events.

Stress Management: Ask about my "53 Stress Reducers" handout for ideas on reducing your stress! Taking time out daily to get off the "rat race treadmill" is very important. Take your kids to the park, the dogs for a walk or have a long bath or sauna. Lowering stress lowers CRP and inflammation!

Nutrition

Natural Blood Thinners: EFA's, vitamin E and C, ginkgo, ginseng and Bolouke (Earth Worm enzyme very effective for dissolving clots) may all be very effective at lowering the requirement for daily aspirin usage. Be sure and see your ND before discontinuing any medications.

CoQ10 supplementation increases the survival rate after cardiac arrest and CPR administration. CoQ10 is important for mitochondrial health and reducing oxidative stress. The dosages used in this trial "Circulation 2004;110:3011-3016" were large and administered by nasogastric tube but indicates the use of this antioxidant. This may interfere with coumadin so see your ND first. Cholesterol lowering statins deplete CoQ10 and needs to be supplemented.

B complex: reduces heart disease risk over 60% by lowering homocysteine.

Niacin and chromium regulate insulin metabolism and lower LDL cholesterol.

Calcium and magnesium lower blood pressure as well as regulate heart rhythm.

Other nutrients

Carnitine, an amino acid, lowers blood pressure and is an important anti-oxidant and energy source for the mitochondria. It regulates fat burning to lower triglycerides.

Taurine: improves blood sugar metabolism, acts as a diuretic, regulates heart rhythm and improves contraction of the heart muscle.

Crataegus or Hawthorne is a classic gentle herb for the heart. It is an anti-oxidant as well as it increases the effectiveness of contraction of the heart muscle. The longer this herb is taken the more effective it becomes.

Resveratrol: is a polyphenol found in red fruits, grapes and berries that is cardioprotective. It inhibits oxidation of LDL's, decreases arrhythmias, protects the lining of arteries and makes platelets less sticky.

New Recipe on Website

Curried Chick Pea Soup

Specials

ProAlgen is the ideal mercury chelator for those eating fish 1 or more times per week. This algae product binds with mercury in the intestinal tract before it is absorbed and eliminated through the bowel. One capsule is taken before the fish meal and one is taken after.

Save 20%: 120 capsules \$43.68.

New at the Office

Magnesium Glycinate Forte: combination for optimal cardiovascular health containing CoQ10, Carnitine, Taurine and Magnesium glycinate.

Resveratrol/Grapenol: 50mg red grape seeds per tab