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# HEART HEALTH

## Ecological Wellness Update, August 2004

### THE BENEFITS OF HIGH CHOLESTEROL

- » People with high cholesterol live the longest

Based on a search on Medline, a research database, eleven studies of elderly people found that high cholesterol is not a risk factor for coronary heart disease. Seven studies found that high cholesterol did not predict all-cause mortality either. (1)

- » Almost all studies found that high cholesterol is not a risk factor for women (2)
- » High cholesterol protects against infections (3)
- » High cholesterol protects against HIV/AIDS (4)
- » The risk of dying from chronic heart failure is inversely associated with total cholesterol, LDL-cholesterol and triglycerides—i.e. those with high lipid values lived much longer than those with low lipid values. (5)

1. Krumholz HM et al. Lack of association between cholesterol and coronary heart disease mortality and morbidity and all-cause mortality in persons older than 70 years. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 272 1335-1340
2. Ravnskov U. High cholesterol may protect against infections and atherosclerosis. *Quarterly Journal of Medicine* 96, 927-934, 2003
3. Jacobs and others. Report of the conference on low blood cholesterol: Mortality associations. *Circulation* 86, 1046-1060, 1992.
4. Neaton JD, Wentworth DN. Low serum cholesterol and risk of death from AIDS. *AIDS* 11 929-930, 1997
5. Racuhlaus, M and others. The relationship between cholesterol and survival in patients with chronic heart failure. *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* 42, 1933-1940, 2003.

<http://thincs.org/index.htm> The International Network of Cholesterol Skeptics

<http://www.ravnskov.nu/cholesterol.htm> The cholesterol myth

### WHAT ABOUT STATIN-BASED MEDICATIONS?

Sally Fallon and Mary G. Enig, PhD, wrote an excellent article entitled "The Trouble with Statins" in the Journal *Wise Traditions in Food, Farming and the Healing Arts*. A summary follows; to read the entire article, go to [www.westonaprice.org/healthissues/statin.html](http://www.westonaprice.org/healthissues/statin.html)

"Sixteen million Americans now take Lipitor, the most popular statin, and drug company officials claim that 36 million Americans are candidates for statin drug therapy. What bedevils the industry is growing reports of side effects that manifest many months after the commencement of therapy; the November 2003 issue of Smart Money magazine reports on a 1999 study at St. Thomas' Hospital in London (apparently unpublished), which found that 36 percent of patients on Lipitor's highest dose reported side effects; even at the lowest dose, 10 percent reported side effects."<sup>1</sup>

According to the authors, the most significant side effects are: muscle pain, neuropathy, heart failure, cognitive impairment, cancer, and depression.

- » *Muscle Pain:* Dr. Golomb found that 98 percent of patients taking Lipitor and one-third of the patients taking Mevacor suffered from muscle problems.<sup>1</sup>
- » *Neuropathy:* Patients who use statins for two or more years are at a four- to 14-fold increased risk of developing idiopathic polyneuropathy compared to controls.<sup>2</sup>
- » *Heart Failure:* Cardiologist Peter Langsjoen studied 20 patients with completely normal heart function. After six months on a low dose of 20 mg of Lipitor a day, two-thirds of the patients had abnormalities in the heart's filling phase, when the muscle fills with blood. <sup>3</sup>
- » *Cognitive Impairment:* Dr. Golomb has found that 15 percent of statin patients develop some cognitive side effects. The most harrowing involve global transient amnesia—complete memory loss for a brief or lengthy period—described by former astronaut Duane Graveline in his book *Lipitor: Thief of Memory*.<sup>4</sup>
- » *Cancer:* In every study with rodents to date, statins have caused cancer. In one trial, the CARE trial, breast cancer rates of those taking a statin went up 1500 percent. <sup>5</sup>
- » *Depression:* Numerous studies find that lowered cholesterol is associated with depression and anxiety. <sup>6</sup>
- » *The Costs:* Statins cost between \$900 and \$1400 a year. They constitute the mostly widely sold pharmaceutical drug, accounting for 6.5 percent of market share and \$12.5 billion in revenue for the industry.

1. Eleanor Laise. The Lipitor Dilemma, Smart Money: The Wall Street Journal Magazine of Personal Business, November 2003; See [forum.ditonline.com](http://forum.ditonline.com)
2. Statins and the Risk of Polyneuropathy. [www.coloradohealthsite.org/CHNReports/statins\\_\\_polyneuropathy.html](http://www.coloradohealthsite.org/CHNReports/statins__polyneuropathy.html)
3. Eleanor Laise. The Lipitor Dilemma, Smart Money: The Wall Street Journal Magazine of Personal Business, November 2003.
4. Duane Graveline, MD. Lipitor: Thief of Memory, 2004, [www.buybooksontheweb.com](http://www.buybooksontheweb.com).
5. Sacks FM and others. N Eng J Med 1996;385:1001-1009.
6. Low Cholesterol Linked to Depression. BBC Online Network, May 25,1999.

## LOWER CHOLESTEROL WITHOUT DRUGS

Simple changes in the diet can achieve the same effects as the use of statins.

- » Avoid trans fats, known to contribute to inflammation
- » Avoid refined sugars, especially fructose, known to stimulate clumping of the blood platelets
- » Take cod liver oil, an excellent dietary source of anti-inflammatory vitamin A, vitamin D and EPA
- » Eat plenty of saturated fats, which encourage the production of anti-inflammatory prostaglandins
- » Take evening primrose, borage or black currant oil, sources of GLA which the body uses to make anti-inflammatory prostaglandins
- » Eat foods high in copper, especially liver; copper deficiency is associated with clot formation and inflammation in the arteries
- » Eat coconut oil and coconut products; coconut oil protects against bacteria and viruses that can lead to inflammation in the artery wall
- » Avoid reduced-fat milks and powdered milk products (such as powdered whey); they contain oxidized cholesterol, shown to cause irritation of the artery wall