



## **CHOLESTEROL REMEDIES**

### **High Cholesterol**

Elevated blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels lead to plaque-filled arteries. This can lead to a slowing of blood flow to major organs - heart, brain, kidneys, and extremities. Most are aware of the significance of high cholesterol levels and heart disease due to the fat deposits in the arteries. It can also cause gallstones, impotence, mental impairment, high blood pressure, and has been linked to colon polyps and cancer – especially breast and prostate.

### **Diet**

Here are some tips, suggestions and some articles of information:

A diet high in cholesterol or saturated fats increases cholesterol levels, while a vegetarian diet, regular exercise and nutrients niacin, Vitamin C can lower cholesterol levels.

Cream substitutes (non dairy creamers) are actually poor alternatives to cholesterol-heavy dairy products because many contain coconut oil, which is highly saturated fat. Soymilk or almond oil is preferable.

Coffee in large amounts can elevate cholesterol levels, more than doubling the risk of heart disease. According to a report in the New England Journal of Medicine, as the intake of coffee rises, the amount of cholesterol in the blood rises.

Avoid eating all nuts except for walnuts, which can be eaten only in moderation if they are raw and have been tightly sealed or refrigerated. For example, the walnuts that are in open bins in kiosks and candy stores are open to air. Also to note is that if eating walnuts, avoid those that have been roasted, or subjected to heat in any way.

Avoid alcohol, cakes, candy, carbonated drinks, nondairy creamers, pies, white bread, and refined carbohydrates.

Include some cholesterol reducing foods such as apples, cold-water fish, bananas, carrots, garlic, grapefruit, olive oil, and dried beans.

Fiber is very important in reducing serum cholesterol. The best forms are found in oat bran and brown rice bran. Whole grain cereals, and brown rice, barely, beans fruits and oats. Fresh juices are wonderful especially carrot which flushes fat from the bile in the liver and helps lower cholesterol.

Meat and dairy are primary sources of dietary cholesterol. Many people believe that using margarine and vegetable shortening instead of butter is advantageous due to lower cholesterol level, however, I firmly disagree with this based on the following information.

The following will help you to understand why I agree with the use of butter over margarine. It is an article from Dr. Weil, which I felt was worthy sharing with you.

(Published 8/6/96) The big health news recently was about a new and improved margarine. Imagine this: Spread it on your toast or bagel and within months your cholesterol count may be down as much as 15 percent, and your risk of a heart attack cut by a third. Even The New England Journal of Medicine has supported the claims of the product called Benecol, made by Finland's Raisio Group. What's not to like?

Well, it sounds to me like the same old margarine story: better living through chemistry. For decades margarine has been touted as the "healthy" alternative to butter, and that's not the case. More studies need to be done on Benecol, and it needs FDA approval. Right now, I also hear that its taste can at best be called "aggressively neutral" and its texture "oily." I don't keep margarine in my house. And I don't plan to.

Margarine was originally developed as a cheap substitute for butter, made out of some fairly unappealing ingredients: beef fat, milk, chopped sheep's stomachs and cow udders (which were then treated and shaped into a glossy white lump using heat, lye and pressure). Over the years, chemists worked on its appeal by switching to vegetable oils and adding chemicals to make margarine more flavorful and easier to spread. As people became more conscious of the dangers of saturated animal fat and cholesterol, margarine makers shifted to polyunsaturated vegetable oils and touted their product as a healthy alternative rather than a cheap substitute.

But guess what? In order to achieve that solid, spreadable consistency, margarine makers had to hydrogenate the vegetable oil, in effect turning it into a saturated fat. So you're not really getting much less saturated fat – the kind that contributes to heart disease and stroke -- than if you were eating butter. And even though margarine is cholesterol-free, the hydrogenated oils will stimulate your body to make its own cholesterol.

Also, the heat and chemicals used to harden vegetable oils into

margarine change fatty acids into unnatural shapes, called trans-fatty acids (TFAs). Bent into the trans-shape, the acids won't fit neatly into cell membranes or other cellular structures. If the body tries to incorporate them anyway, the cell may become deformed. As a result, trans-fatty acids not only contribute to heart disease, but may also increase cancer risks, promote inflammation and accelerate tissue degeneration.

Finally, both butter and margarine may contain residues of toxins. Drugs (in the case of butter) and pesticides tend to concentrate in fat. So your best bet is to avoid eating butter and margarine.

Enjoy good bread without any spread at all. Create low-fat toppings for your potatoes and other vegetables. And if you want a bit of butter, use the real thing.

Dr. Andrew Weil

## **Exercise**

Of course one should always consult their physician prior to any exercise regime; however, exercise is paramount to lowering cholesterol. Most of you already know what you need to do to begin an exercise program, however, you may lack the motivation to proceed. Although a later section will be dedicated to this subject, why not get up right now and walk for just 10 minutes. You will be amazed at how accomplished you will feel after this small task! Maybe tomorrow, you will go for longer.

## **Stress Management Techniques**

There are numerous techniques for reducing stress, such as meditation, deep breathing, or exercise. Find out what works for you. Please refer to the article related to stress which discusses the benefits of stress management and outlines some of the most practical methods.

---

## **Supplements**

Following is a section discussing some of the herbs that have been regarded as aids to reducing cholesterol, and some information about each.

**Guggul**, the sticky gum resin from the mukul myrrh tree, plays a major role in the traditional herbal medicine of India. It was traditionally combined with other herbs for the treatment of arthritis, skin diseases, pain in the nervous system, obesity, digestive problems, infections in the mouth, and menstrual problems.

Guggul is a resin known to increase white blood cell counts and possess strong disinfecting properties. It may have been one of the very first "broad spectrum drugs" with a wide therapeutic range. A broad mode of action makes this plant very helpful not only in protecting against the common cold, but also in various skin, dental and ophthalmic infections. In addition, Guggul has long been known to lower cholesterol and triglycerides, while maintaining or improving the HDL to LDL ratio.

Guggul significantly lowers serum triglycerides and cholesterol as well as LDL and VLDL cholesterol (the "bad" cholesterol). At the same time, it raises levels of HDL cholesterol (the "good" cholesterol). As antioxidants, guggulsterones keep LDL cholesterol from oxidizing, which protects against atherosclerosis.<sup>3</sup> Guggul has also been shown to reduce the stickiness of platelets—another effect that lowers the risk of coronary artery disease

Guggul is manufactured in standardized form that provides a fixed amt of guggulsterones, the presumed active ingredients of guggul. The typical dose should provide 100 mg of guggulsterones.

Daily recommendations for guggul are typically based on the amount of guggulsterones in the extract. A common intake of guggulsterones is 25 mg three times a day. Most extracts contain 5–10% guggulsterones and can be taken daily for twelve to twenty-four weeks.

Contraindications: Early studies with the crude oleoresin reported numerous side effects, including [diarrhea](#), [anorexia](#), abdominal pain, and skin rash. Modern extracts are more purified, and fewer side effects (e.g., mild abdominal discomfort) have been reported with long-term use. Guggul should be used with caution by persons with liver disease and in cases of inflammatory bowel disease and diarrhea. A physician should be consulted for any case of elevated [cholesterol](#) and [triglycerides](#).

**Garlic** may mildly decrease bad cholesterol levels - I think it would have to be quite a bit of garlic to do this alone. The usual dose of garlic is 300 mg three times daily of an extract standardized to contain 1.3% alliin. Aged garlic extracts (which contain no alliin) at a dose of 1 to 7.2 g daily may be effective as well.

Keep in mind that garlic may benefit the heart in other ways. It seems to help many factors at once, including reducing blood pressure, protecting against free radicals, and slowing blood coagulation. The combined effects appear to be positive. They have done studies to show that garlic significantly reduced the development of atherosclerosis.

Putting all this information together, it does seem that garlic can be helpful in preventing heart disease, strokes, and other consequences of atherosclerosis.

But this is a **critical point** - Garlic presents certain health risks because it **thins the blood**. So it is crucial to be mindful of other medications or supplements that have blood-thinning properties, being used at the same time.

## **Chromium Picolinate**

Chromium, GTF [Glandular] is a trace mineral that plays a role in regulating blood sugar levels. Each "glucose tolerance factor" (GTF) molecule, a hormone-like compound, requires chromium as its central atom. GTF works with insulin to transport glucose from the blood into the cells. When this function is not working properly, the cells resist insulin and do not properly

absorb the glucose needed for energy. The liver also needs chromium to manufacture fatty acids, lecithin, cholesterol and lipoproteins. Without chromium, blood fats tend to rise because the liver cannot filter them out. Processing destroys much of the chromium content in foods.

400- 600 mcg. Daily. Lowers total cholesterol levels and improves HDL-LDL ratio

### **Apple Pectin**

Lowers cholesterol by binding fats and heavy metals

### **Fiber**

Oat bran and guar gum are good sources. Take fiber supplements separately from other supplements and medications.

### **Coenzyme Q10**

Improves circulation – 60 mg. Daily

### **Vitamin B complex**

Vitamin B-Complex [Vital Nutrition] was the second vitamin discovered. Many different vitamin B compounds are grouped under the name B-complex. These vitamins are easily lost in refining and cooking; they can also be washed from the body by coffee, tea, alcohol and heavy perspiration. Physically stressful conditions can also deplete the body of B vitamins. B-vitamins are particularly important for the nervous system and are also vital for good digestive function and enzyme reactions that control energy, circulation, hormones and overall health. Their actions are interdependent; so for greatest efficiency the complex should be taken together.

### **Vitamin B3 (Niacin)**

Niacin [Circulatory, Nervous] is the plant form of vitamin B3 (or nicotinic acid), and niacinamide is the form found in the animal kingdom. Niacin is an important vitamin for the circulatory and nervous systems. The body's energy system also requires niacin for proper function. Do not exceed 300 mg. A day. Do not take if you have a liver disorder, gout or high blood pressure.

### **Vitamin B6 (Inositol)**

The action of Vit B6 is to help the liver process fats.

Inositol (which is Vit B6) may also be involved in depression. People who are depressed have much lower-than-normal levels of inositol in their spinal fluid. In addition, inositol participates in the action of *serotonin*, a neurotransmitter known to be a factor in depression. (Neurotransmitters are chemicals that transmit messages between nerve cells.) For this reason, inositol has been proposed as a treatment for depression, and preliminary evidence suggests that it may be helpful.

## Red Rice Yeast

After reading up on red yeast rice, I would not feel comfortable in recommending it, without being monitored by an MD. It is very much like the “meds” that are prescribed – like prevachol and Mevacor. It has too many risks and possible side effects.

Here is some info as to why I have some concerns:

Recently, it has been discovered that this ancient Chinese preparation contains at least 11 naturally occurring substances similar to prescription drugs in the "statin" family, such as Mevacor and Pravachol. These medications are highly effective at reducing cholesterol.

Because red yeast rice contains ingredients similar to the statin drugs, there is a theoretical risk of the same side effects and risks that are seen with those drugs. These include elevated liver enzymes, damage to skeletal muscle, and increased risk of cancer.

Red yeast rice should **not** be combined with erythromycin, other statin drugs, the class of drugs called "fibrates," or high-dose niacin (for lowering cholesterol). **Serious side effects have reportedly occurred when statin drugs were combined with these medications.**

Additionally, like statin drugs, red yeast rice may deplete the body of a substance called coenzyme Q<sub>10</sub>

**Grapefruit juice** can cause a significant and possibly dangerous increase in blood levels of statin drugs. For this reason, grapefruit juice should be avoided when taking red yeast rice.

- **Erythromycin**, cholesterol-lowering drugs in the [statin](#) or fibrate family, or high-dose [niacin](#): Do not take red yeast rice.
- **Red yeast rice**: Do not drink grapefruit juice.
- **Red yeast rice**: You may need extra [CoQ<sub>10</sub>](#).

## Lecithin

**Lecithin** is a fat emulsifier. It is produced daily by the liver if the diet is adequate. Lecithin is needed by every cell in the body and is a key building block of cell membranes; without it, they would harden. Lecithin protects cells from oxidation and largely comprises the protective sheaths surrounding the brain. It is composed mostly of B vitamins, phosphoric acid, choline, linoleic acid and inositol. Although it is a fatty substance, it is also a fat emulsifier. Hence, it supports the circulatory system. Its choline is useful for making acetylcholine.

## Vitamin C with bioflavonoids

## Vitamin E