



Controlling Cholesterol & Heart Disease

Mission:

We at West U Wellness are committed to serving people who want a natural, higher quality of life for themselves and their families. We acknowledge that physical, chemical, and particularly emotional stress has devastating effects on the nervous system. Chiropractic adjustments remove this nervous system interference. Therefore, we go to extraordinary measures in educating society about the benefits of chiropractic care for optimal health.

The Cardiovascular System:

The heart and its circulatory system are one of the largest and most important body systems. It functions to deliver oxygen and vital nutrition to cells throughout the body. Heart disease and stroke are the #1 and #3 killers in the United States. These two conditions are responsible for about 43% of all deaths in the U.S. They are often referred to as "silent killers" because the first symptom or sign in many cases is a fatal event.

There are numerous distinct disorders that relate to the heart, such as high blood pressure or hypertension, arteriosclerosis and atherosclerosis, angina, heart attack and heart failure.

Diet and lifestyle changes are *essential* in treating heart problems. Important among these changes are getting more exercise and giving up smoking. Your heart is the most important muscle in your body. The heart requires proper nutrition, so poor nourishment has a profound effect on the heart.

Research has shown that as people age, their eating habits get worse, thus increasing their risk of cardiovascular disease. These changes can be identified in an individual's blood chemistry. Cholesterol, as an example, is a major component in one's blood that is directly related to cardiovascular disease.

Why High Cholesterol is Bad for You

In the landmark Framingham Heart Study, scientists found that cholesterol is a key predictor for heart attacks. Cholesterol is an essential type of fat used for making new cells, skin, and hormones among other things. Your liver is responsible for processing cholesterol. However, if there's too much cholesterol in your blood, it will build up in the walls of your arteries. These cholesterol molecules act like glue attracting other cholesterol molecules that pass by and eventually hardening the arterial wall. The hardening then leads to narrowing of the artery, which limits the flow of blood and oxygen.

Keep your "Highs" high, and your "Lows" low

Cholesterol can be broken down into different forms to give you a cholesterol profile. High density lipoprotein (HDL) is actually a good type of cholesterol that you want to maintain a high level of. It helps to pick up the extra cholesterol molecules floating around in your circulation and takes it back to the liver to be processed. Low density lipoprotein (LDL) is one of the "bad" types and you want to keep this low. Triglycerides are another "bad" form of cholesterol that can be elevated particularly with the amounts of sweets one consumes.

Total cholesterol – should be below 200 mg/dl
HDL(good cholesterol) – should be above 35 mg/dl
LDL(bad cholesterol) – should be below 130 mg/dl
Triglycerides – should be below 200 mg/dl

Reducing Cholesterol

People with high cholesterol are usually prescribed a statin drug (i.e., Lipitor). However, statin drugs have also been shown to reduce Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10), which is a major heart protective nutrient. Statin drugs also have a side-effect of muscle pain.

Both statin drugs and natural remedies have been shown to reduce cholesterol by 14-20%. If your cholesterol is out of control, it is recommended you use both the medication prescribed by your doctor as well as the following recommendations until your cholesterol levels fall into the more acceptable ranges:

- Eat more fiber! The recommended amount is 35 grams/day. Most studies show that Americans consume only around 9 grams/day.
- Decrease saturated fats. This includes anything that is a solid at room temperature (i.e., butter).
- Protein. Instead of heavy amounts of protein from red meat, concentrate more on vegetable proteins like soy and whey.
- Nuts about nuts. Nuts are rich in the good type of fat such as Omega-3 and Omega-6.
- Viva Italia! The Italians use a lot of extra-virgin olive oil and garlic in their cooking. Consequently, they also have a lower incidence of heart disease; incorporate these additions to your family's cooking. Whole heads of garlic can even be roasted with olive oil in the oven and used as a substitute for butter with bread, rice, and meat dishes.
- Flax seeds. Known for being used to make linen, flax seeds are high in fiber and Omega-3 fatty acids, which can lower cholesterol. Since whole flax seeds are not digestible, it can be taken as an oil, but it also best used as "flax seed meal". This can be used in baked goods (like you would use sesame or poppy seeds) or sprinkled over salad.
- Omega-3. Omega-3 is a type of "good fat" found in cold-water fish like salmon, tuna, and mackerel, as well as dark, green leafy vegetables, seaweed, and oils such as flaxseed.
- Nicotinic acid & Chromium. A form of B3, nicotinic acid plus chromium in high doses has been proven to lower cholesterol.

There are certainly many other things that have been shown to reduce cholesterol, but this is a brief example of things you can try at home.

What's the Big Deal about Cholesterol?

For the past 40 years, doctors have believed that cholesterol is the primary predictor of heart attacks and stroke. But a study done between Methodist Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine found that of 360,000 men, 24% with normal total cholesterol still died of a heart attack! So is cholesterol really the answer?

Most people are aware that smoking, high blood pressure, being overweight, as well as high amounts of cortisol and stress can increase one's chance of having a heart attack or stroke. However, more recent research illustrates that different subclasses of cholesterol-carrying particles plus other substances can paint a more accurate picture of a patient's heart health than the standard cholesterol profile. They include apolipoprotein A-1, apolipoprotein B, fibrinogen, high sensitivity C-reactive protein, homocysteine, insulin, lipoprotein(a), LDL IIIa and IIIb, and HDL2b.

These can be easily tested from a blood sample, but a lab qualified to measure for these markers should do them. Oftentimes these expensive tests can be covered by your health insurance if you are at risk for heart attacks.

As chiropractors, we are trained in nutritional counseling and exercise conditioning, and both are regularly practiced in our office. Should you seek an appointment to find out about how to lower your chances of having a heart attack, please call our office at (713) 490-2225.

Want to learn more? Please also come to our free talk on ways to reduce cholesterol & heart disease on Tuesday, October 12 from 6:00 – 6:45 pm.



HEALTHY LIVING

E-Newsletter

Volume I Issue V
September 2004

Fit for Life Program

***High cholesterol? Rising blood pressure or blood sugar?
Gaining weight? Lack of energy and activity?***

Join West U Wellness' 8-week doctor-supported "Fit for Life" program!
Each week you will meet at our clinic to take measurements such as cholesterol, blood pressure, blood glucose, height, weight and body fat. You will be given proven exercises, equipment, and nutritional advice to help you achieve your ideal body weight. A personal trainer will lead the exercises and participants may be eligible for a one-month free pass to 24 Hour Fitness. As a bonus, you can join our West U Walking Club which will meet three times a week. A great deal for only \$150.00!

**Only a few spaces remain for the next session so act now.
Call (713) 490-2225 to sign-up.**

West U Wellness hosts or participates in numerous events and activities each month. Included in these events are free health talks covering a different topic every **Tuesday at 6:00 PM** in West U Wellness. We believe these talks to be a means of allowing our patients to improve their lifestyles.

****Join us this coming Tuesday, September 21st at 6:00pm for information on how Chiropractic and Pilates can help reduce stress. A certified instructor will be offering a free introduction to Pilates.***



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September 2004

September Calendar of Events

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 Childhood Illness Health Talk*	8	9	10	11 West U Wellness Open
12	13	14 Exercise & Fitness Health Talk	15 TSU Health Fair	16	17	18
19	20	21 Stress Management Health Talk w/ Pilates *	22	23	24	25 West U Wellness Open
26	27	28 TMJ Health Talk w/ Dr. Howes, DDS	29	30		

October Calendar of Events

					1	2
3	4	5 Isagenix Health Talk	6	7	8	9 West U Wellness Open
10	11	12 Cholesterol and Heart Disease Health Talk	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Health Talk	20	21	22	23 West U Wellness Open
24	25	26 Acupuncture Health Talk	27	28	29	30