

Leyla weighs in: More on heart disease

In a previous article, I discussed how ultra low-fat diets can be dangerous for cardiovascular disease given how they can turn LDL into atherogenic “B pattern” particles.

But there’s more to the story, according to Joseph Pizzorno, N.D., in a recent article in *Integrative Medicine* (Vol. 13;3:2014):



LDL becomes very problematic when it’s oxidized, and inflammation is the cause of it. Oxidized LDL (oxLDL) is directly involved in the atherosclerotic lesions in coronary arteries that result in cardiovascular disease. It also is associated with angina, accelerated atherosclerosis and heart attack.

Because of that, we routinely check for oxLDL here at the Hoffman Center.

Interestingly, elevated oxLDL also is associated with insulin resistance, metabolic syndrome (a subject for a future newsletter!) and untreated hypothyroidism. You can imagine then that getting these conditions under control can help reduce levels of oxLDL.

Other contributors to oxLDL are elevated homocysteine and hs-CRP, both markers of inflammation. High homocysteine is treated with vitamins B6, B12, trimethylglycine and methylfolate as found in Methyl Guard Plus. Those with very high homocysteine levels may need additional nutritional support with SAM-e.

Polyunsaturated vegetable oils are a promoter of oxLDL because they’re volatile and become rancid quickly. It is my sincere hope that the American Heart Association will one day stop encouraging intake of proinflammatory vegetable oils as a replacement for healthy saturated fats.

Excessive alcohol intake is a “mitochondrial poison” according to Dr. Pizzorno, and it also raises triglycerides, an independent risk factor for heart disease.

Exposure to toxic metals such as lead, mercury, arsenic and cadmium, and PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) oxidize LDL and are associated with carotid artery plaques. Eat organic as often as possible and choose low-mercury seafood. GotMercury.org is a useful website for determining how much mercury your seafood of choice contains.

Make sure to get some good quality antioxidants such as vitamin C, vitamin E and garlic, and eat plenty of colorful vegetables and dark-colored fruits. CoQ10 is shown to reduce LDL oxidation in humans and taking NAC will help boost glutathione levels—your master endogenous antioxidant.

To your health!