TREATING HIGH CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

I am constantly being asked how to reduce cholesterol levels naturally. Statin drugs used to treat elevated blood cholesterol levels are associated with muscle and kidney injury when used alone or combined with other medications.

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO TO NORMALIZE YOUR CHOLESTEROL?

There are two primary strategies that work well over 99 percent of the time if properly implemented. They are: Daily cardiovascular exercise and a Low grain diet. A healthy food plan with little to no grains and sugars will effectively lower insulin levels. Elevated insulin levels are one of the primary drivers for raising cholesterol. There are numerous food products that are proven to reduce cholesterol levels naturally. I have dedicated this entire Newsletter to this topic. Due to the large amount of information on this topic I have had to take 4 pages to cover it all.

BERGAMOT FOR TREATING HIGH CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

Bergamot is known for its uplifting citrus scent and antiseptic properties. Now bergamot may have a role in managing cholesterol and blood glucose levels. Bergamot is the common name of the citrus bergamia risso plant. The fruit has a yellow skin and is the size of an orange. Although native to south-east Asia, 80% of the world’s bergamot is produced in Calabria, southern Italy where it grows extensively.

If you’ve never heard of bergamot you’ve probably been exposed to it. The oil from the peel is used to flavour Earl Grey tea and 50% of women’s perfumes contain bergamot.
In two separate studies, Italian researchers have found that bergamot can help lower cholesterol levels. In the most recent study researchers studied 82 people – who each had a total cholesterol and triglyceride level of 250 or higher (levels higher than 240 are generally regarded as dangerous). The participants’ diet and other medications were modified for the trial. Each participant took one or two doses of 500 mg of citrus bergamot polyphenolic extract for 30 days. The results showed a significant decrease in bad cholesterol, triglycerides and blood glucose levels. The results were:

- 42% increase in HDL (good cholesterol)
- 38% decrease in LDL (bad cholesterol)
- 41% decrease in triglycerides
- up to 25% decrease in blood glucose.

Lead researcher, Dr Vincenzo Mollace, professor at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University “Magna Graecia”, Catanzaro, Italy was encouraged by the result. He said “In just four weeks, we saw a significant reduction in total cholesterol, LDL and triglycerides among patients who had elevated cholesterol levels and a high risk for CVD (cardio vascular disease). In addition, we are seeing significant increase in HDL, the good cholesterol and a reduction in blood glucose.”

How Does Bergamot Work? Bergamot is a powerful antioxidant that protects cells from oxidation and free-radicals. The researchers found the cardiovascular benefits of bergamot stem from its unique combination and high concentration of flavanoids that include naringin, neoeriocitrin and neohesperidin. These compounds work by blocking a key enzyme in the production of cholesterol (just like conventional statin medications). Unlike statins, which can have severe side effects, the study showed no significant side effects from taking bergamot. However, bergamot can interfere with other medications.

**BERGAMOT ALSO BENEFITS BLOOD GLUCOSE LEVELS**

It’s not just people with high cholesterol who may benefit from bergamot. People at risk of diabetes, such as those with prediabetes and metabolic syndrome, may benefit as bergamot has been shown to lower blood glucose levels by between 15-25%. Where Can You Buy Bergamot? Citrus Bergamot Polyphenolic Extract capsules are sold at selected health food stores, pharmacies and online. Although bergamot capsules are derived from the same plant as bergamot oil they are not interchangeable. Bergamot may be beneficial to you if you suffer from high cholesterol, insulin resistance or metabolic syndrome. Always talk to your healthcare practitioner before starting any new medication or herbal supplement.

**BLUEBERRIES REDUCE CHOLESTEROL**

Blueberries have received no end of good press over recent years. What a new study has done though is show that blueberries have another very handy action in lowering bad cholesterol and it has also shown how they do this. For the study a group of hamsters were fed a high fat diet. They were then divided into three groups. 1 - One group had blueberry skins added to their diet; that is, the portion left over when a blueberry is juiced. 2 - Another group was given fibre extracted from blueberry peel and 3 - a third group was given polyphenols from blueberry peel.

The study was designed in this way to attempt to establish which part of the blueberry peel, if any, might exert an effect. The results showed that all of the three groups of hamsters that were fed blueberry by-products had total cholesterol levels that were between 22 and 27 per cent lower than hamsters who were given no blueberry at all in their diet.

Additionally, levels of very low density lipoprotein (VLDL - a bad form of cholesterol) were about 44 per cent lower in all blueberry fed hamsters. This does not tell us what part of the blueberry is having the effect but analysis by the researchers did suggest how it was being done. Using a genetic test called real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR), the researchers established that the blueberry was switching off genes in the liver that either make cholesterol or use cholesterol. The net result: lower cholesterol. Source: [http://bit.ly/kVF7by](http://bit.ly/kVF7by)

**COCONUT OIL AND CHOLESTEROL**

Coconut oil is "special" among saturated fats. Coconut oil is a rare gem among saturated fats, with numerous health benefits. First, did you know that multiple studies on Pacific Island populations who get 30-60 percent of their total caloric intake from fully saturated coconut oil have all shown nearly non-existent rates of cardiovascular disease?

Coconut oil can be helpful for pregnant women, nursing moms, the elderly, those concerned about digestive health, athletes (even weekend warriors), and those of you who just want to enhance your overall health. One of the explanations for its broad health applications is because it’s rich in lauric acid, which converts in your body to monolaurin – a compound also found in breast milk that strengthens a baby’s immunity. Its medium chain fatty acids, or triglycerides (MCT’s), also impart a number of health benefits, including raising your body’s metabolism and

fighting off pathogens such as viruses, bacteria and fungi. Capric acid, another coconut fatty acid present in smaller amounts, is another antimicrobial component.

Coconut oil is also excellent for your thyroid. Additionally, a very exciting and recent discovery is that coconut oil may even serve as a natural treatment for Alzheimer's disease, as MCT's are also a primary source of ketone bodies, which act as an alternate source of brain fuel that can help prevent the brain atrophy associated with dementia.

Most of the conventional advice relating to coconut oil and cholesterol are false and misleading. Coconut oil has been repeatedly shown to be beneficial rather than detrimental on cholesterol levels and heart health. It's been clearly established for over 80 years now that suppression of the thyroid raises serum cholesterol (and increases mortality from infections, cancer, and heart disease), while restoring the thyroid hormone brings cholesterol down to normal. As mentioned earlier, coconut oil does both; it balances your thyroid and normalizes your cholesterol levels.

Coconut oil, added regularly to a balanced diet, lowers cholesterol to normal by promoting its conversion into pregnenolone. Coconut-eating cultures in the tropics have lower cholesterol than people in the U.S. Use organic coconut oil for all your cooking needs. It is far superior to any other cooking oil and is loaded with health benefits. Make sure you choose an organic coconut oil that is unrefined, unbleached, made without heat processing or chemicals, and does not contain GM ingredients. Source: http://bit.ly/kG0Xf3

### TCM HERBS TREAT HIGH CHOLESTEROL LEVELS IN THE BLOOD

Jue Ming Hua Tan Shen Shi Wan: Polygonum & Crataegus Combination Black Pearl BP073 has been designed specifically to treat hypercholesterolaemia (high blood cholesterol). It is composed of 12 different Chinese Herbs. It should not be taken by patients on anti-coagulant medications. The course of treatment should be 3 to 6 months. Lifestyle interventions such as regular exercise, frequent small meals and elimination of refined carbohydrates and reduction in carbohydrates in general should be included in the treatment program. The most economical way to treat hypercholesterolaemia is to purchase three months supply of this formula at a time. The herbal remedy can be ordered through Linda at ANTRAC Acupuncture Clinic — 4636 6100. The natural treatment costs approximately $15 per week. Caution to those on anti-coagulant medications — heparin, warfarin or aspirin.

### USING SOLUBLE FIBRE TO LOWER CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

**Soluble Fiber** helps lower the bad Low Density Lipoprotein or LDL cholesterol without lowering the good High Density Lipoprotein or HDL cholesterol. The fibre grabs onto cholesterol and escorts it through your digestive system and out of your body. Eating an additional 5 to 10 grams of soluble fibre a day can reduce LDL cholesterol by 3 to 5 percent. Some studies showed that this amount can lower cholesterol by as much as 23 percent. Some of the best soluble fiber rich foods include; oatmeal, Psyllium, barley, lentils, Brussels sprouts, peas, beans (kidney, lima, black, navy, pinto), apples, blackberries, pears, raisins, oranges, grapefruit, dates, figs, prunes, apricots, broccoli, and sweet potato. Source: http://on.today.com/os9RvG

### USING OMEGA 3 FATTY ACIDS TO LOWER CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

For **omega 3 fatty acids** I recommend eating at least three servings (4-ounce portions) of one of the omega-3-rich fish every week — fish like wild salmon, sardines, anchovies, trout, herring and mackerel (not king). If you cannot manage to eat that much fishy fish, incorporate omega 3 fortified eggs and additional plant based sources like walnuts, soybeans and ground flax. Also, consider taking fish oil capsules. If you have high triglyceride levels, 2 to 4 g of EPA and DHA (two specific types of omega 3 oil) as supplements under your doctor's care. Source: http://on.today.com/os9RvG

### USING PLANT STEROLS OR STANOLS TO LOWER CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

**Plant sterols or stanols**: These are natural substances found in small amounts in the cell membrane of plants, including fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, and seeds. The National Cholesterol Education Program recommends that people who have high cholesterol eat 2 grams of plant sterols or stanols a day. Sterols are found in relatively high amounts in pistachio nuts, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, and wheat germ. Sterols have a structure similar to cholesterol, and they compete with cholesterol for access to receptors in the small intestines, effectively blocking its absorption by about 50 percent, and to reduce LDL cholesterol levels by between 5 and 14 percent. If you are taking a prescription cholesterol-lowering medication, talk with your doctor before taking sterol/stanol supplements. Source: http://on.today.com/os9RvG
The Clinic is located at 216 Ramsay Street, Middle Ridge, 5 houses south of Kate’s Place, directly opposite the Blue Care Nursing entrance, and beside the Story Farm Park. Parking signage is present. Follow the pavers to Entry signs to the Clinic at the rear of the house.

**MISSION STATEMENT:**
“I aim to get my patients as well as possible, as quickly as possible, and then to keep them that way”.

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**USING NUTS AND SEEDS TO LOWER CHOLESTEROL LEVELS**

Nuts for Healthy Fats. Nuts are rich in fiber, phytonutrients and antioxidants such as Vitamin E and selenium. These tasty snacks are also high in plant sterols and fat - but mostly monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, which have all been shown to lower the bad LDL cholesterol. How much do you need? In 2003, the FDA recognized the benefits of nuts and their role in heart disease prevention by approving a health claim for seven kinds of nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, some pine nuts, pistachios and walnuts). Limit your intake to about 1.5 ounces a day, as nuts are high in calories. The best way to reap the health benefits of nuts is to eat them in replacement of foods that are high in saturated fats such as fatty meat products.

Source: http://on.today.com/os9RvG

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**USING RED YEAST RICE TO LOWER CHOLESTEROL LEVELS**

Red yeast rice is rice that has been fermented by the red yeast, *Monascus purpureus*. It has been used by the Chinese for many centuries as a food preservative, food colorant (it is responsible for the red color of Peking duck), spice, and an ingredient in rice wine. Red yeast rice continues to be a dietary staple in China, Japan, and Asian communities in the United States, with an estimated average consumption of 14 to 55 grams of red yeast rice per day per person. Red yeast rice also has been used in China for over 1,000 years for medicinal purposes.

Red yeast rice contains naturally-occurring substances called monacolins. Monacolins, particularly one called lovastatin, is believed to be converted in the body to a substance that inhibits HMG-CoA reductase, an enzyme that triggers cholesterol production. This is the way the popular statin drugs work. Because of this action, red yeast rice products containing a higher concentration of monacolins have been developed and marketed as a natural product to lower cholesterol. The problem is that the primary ingredient in these supplements, lovastatin, is also the active pharmaceutical ingredient in prescription drugs for high cholesterol such as Mevacor.

When the FDA discovered that red yeast rice contained a substance found in prescription drugs, it banned red yeast rice products containing lovastatin. In August, 2007, the FDA issued a warning that several red yeast rice products still containedlovastatin. The manufacturers of these products have since recalled these products. Because of its similarity to the statin drugs, there is an ongoing legal debate in the USA about whether red yeast rice should be reclassified as a prescription drug rather than a dietary supplement.

**What is the Evidence for Red Yeast Rice?**

For example, a study conducted by the UCLA School of Medicine examined the use of red yeast rice in 83 people with high cholesterol. Subjects were randomized to receive 2.4 grams a day red yeast rice or placebo, and they were told to consume a 30% fat diet (with no more than 10% of this from saturated fat and less than 300 mg cholesterol a day). After the 12 week treatment period, there was a significant reduction in total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, and triglyceride levels, compared with placebo. HDL cholesterol was not affected in this study.

**Side Effects** - Red yeast rice products have been found to contain citrinin, a toxic by-product of the fermentation process. Pregnant or nursing women and children should not use red yeast rice. People with liver disease or at risk for liver disease should not use red yeast rice, as red yeast rice may impair liver function. People with acute infections, kidney disease, or who have had an organ transplant should not use red yeast rice. People taking red yeast rice who develop muscle pain or tenderness should discontinue the product immediately and check with their doctor.


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How is your shopping list looking?

**All the very best wishes for your wellness and longevity from Louis and Linda.**

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