

Soaring Heights Longevity Research Center

The Cholesterol Scare: Are You One Of Millions Of Victims?

By Dr. David Tanton, Ph.D.

Every year, millions of people fall victim to the very deceptive, highly profitable cholesterol scam ... are you one of them? If you are taking a cholesterol lowering medication, also called statins, the answer is an astounding yes! It's time to take action: Get off them immediately, before they do any more damage.

The pharmaceutical companies producing statins have successfully convinced many doctors, and their patients, that cholesterol, our very best friend, is instead our worst enemy.

The truth is LDL cholesterol plays many critical roles in both the body and brain. It forms the very basis of our hormones, and vitamin D, which provides many benefits. The majority of cholesterol is found in the brain, where it serves as an insulator for neurons. Cholesterol even removes toxins from the blood stream, preventing potential damage to the arteries. Cholesterol is part of every cell wall, and plays a critical role in sealing and stabilizing damaged or weakened arteries. Approximately 20 percent comes from the diet, and the liver produces the remaining 80 percent in order to meet the body's demands. Our body produces only what it needs, thus we should allow our bodies to regulate it. The problem is actually when our cholesterol is too low – that can be serious! Many studies have proven that just as many people with low or normal cholesterol experience a heart attack, as those with elevated cholesterol!

Incidentally, in 1966, following Harvard's famous Framingham cholesterol study, the public was told that a total cholesterol count of 300 was good! Yet, according to the *Annals of Internal Medicine* (April 20, 2004; 140: 644-649), the American College of Physicians released a report stating new proposed guidelines, recommending that diabetics take cholesterol-lowering drugs, regardless of whether they have good cholesterol levels or not! The question is, was Harvard's prior study somehow seriously flawed? I think not. Unfortunately, the more recent guidelines are those that most doctors are now following.

When our LDL is excessively elevated, it's an indicator that we need to address the underlying problem that our cholesterol is attempting to deal with – not take a cholesterol-lowering medication. The most likely contributors to elevated LDL are: low vitamin C, toxins, low thyroid, elevated homocysteine (the rogue amino acid that damages the arteries, and oxidizes cholesterol), and even stress, as the body actually uses LDL to produce stress hormones! Unfortunately, blood tests to determine cholesterol levels can be inconclusive and a total waste of time and money, as our levels will vary daily. Then as usual, our bodies are very efficient at managing the details. Our body also knows how to eliminate any excess cholesterol by converting it into another critical substance, known as bile, which the liver uses to metabolize fats and fat-soluble vitamins, as well as escorting toxins into the intestinal tract for removal. Our body is very efficient at regulating and utilizing all its resources, including cholesterol.

Unfortunately, when taken, statins target the LDL cholesterol, which our bodies depend upon the very most! HDL cholesterol's role is basically to remove any excess cholesterol from the arteries once the LDL's job is complete, and the damage to the artery has been repaired.

You'd think someone would have discovered this long ago. However, because statins have provided huge profits for many years, at least someone did benefit! Unfortunately, millions of their victims are unknowingly paying the ultimate price.

Now that you know what your body does with excess cholesterol, we'll take a look at how the LDL cholesterol ends up in our arteries, and why we would be in trouble if it weren't there. For instance, one of LDL cholesterol's many functions is to maintain the integrity of our arteries, and prevent any potential leakage or blood loss, which is critical to our very survival.

The epithelial cells that line the arteries are basically held together by collagen. Vitamin C plays a critical role in the production of collagen, necessary for the integrity of our vascular system. When someone is deficient in Vitamin C, the body will naturally produce LDL in order to fill the Vitamin C void. A few things are responsible for contributing to the vitamin C deficiency, and weakened leaky arteries, such as:

- Microwave cooking, which destroys from 60 to 90 percent of vitamin C, vitamin E and all B vitamins!
- Of the 180 most prescribed medications, 114 (over 63 percent) depleted vitamin C, along with many other vitamins and minerals.
- Many seniors especially are experiencing a serious nutritional deficiency, often due to a poor diet, and too many medications.

Most importantly, vitamin C is readily available, and very affordable (although unlike statin medications, not covered by your insurance)! One more flaw in our current healthcare system.

Another Contributor To Elevated Cholesterol – Low Thyroid

Two symptoms associated with a hypothyroid (low thyroid) condition are leaky blood vessels and elevated cholesterol. Most doctors would prescribe a statin to resolve this issue. The solution, again, is resolving the underlying problem, the hypothyroid condition. Once your thyroid function has been normalized, your cholesterol level will soon stabilize. The blood vessels will no longer leak, and the HDL will then remove the LDL, and the liver will then find another use for it.

What Are Some Of the “Benefits” Of Taking Cholesterol Lowering Statins?

- Congestive heart failure and cardiomyopathy (Dr. Langsjoen, *Life Extension* magazine, 2004 February, p. 14).
- Calcification of the arteries – basically turning you into a cardiac invalid (*Life Extension* magazine, March 2004, p. 67).
- Then, increasing your risk of experiencing kidney failure is just an added benefit (*Journal of Nutritional and Environmental Medicine*, 2003;13:13-22).

So, the question remains: What “true benefits” do cholesterol-lowering medications really provide? At least, to date, I have yet to discover any.

If you watch the evening news on TV, you are constantly reminded of the cholesterol “threat”, attempting to reinforce the fact that it’s a serious concern. Most often, it’s some company that produces statins to lower cholesterol, although at other times it might be eating Cheerios™, the processed breakfast cereal with the typical additives and preservatives, although that is never discussed, of course. One drug in particular stands out, because you would normally see their commercials over and over in one evening – the statin called Vytorin™. It was promoted as the very best, as they found a way to lower your cholesterol the very most, by combining the two different drugs Lipitor™, and Zetia™. What a brilliant idea! Although for some reason, they stopped the commercials, yet you’ll find it’s still available. So, next we’ll see if lower is really better, (something that many doctors continue stressing).

What Happens When You Drive Cholesterol Too Low? The Rate of Plaque Growth Nearly Doubles – That’s What!

So far, not one single company producing statins (for lowering cholesterol) have been able to prove that lowering a person’s cholesterol actually provides any benefit whatsoever. Although, to the contrary, they have instead been proven to create many serious side effects – one fact that is well known, although totally ignored. Just as many with low cholesterol, as those with elevated cholesterol, suffer from heart attacks, (obviously no real benefit in that regard). Yet we do know that the majority of cancer patients actually have low cholesterol, and there is a good explanation.

One of the many benefits of cholesterol is neutralizing the toxins that can damage the DNA, increasing the risk of developing cancer. Then, due to the unbelievable cholesterol paranoia they have managed to create through the media, statins have become one of the most profitable classes of drugs on the market today. Some things that have been discovered to date is, they can contribute to cardiomyopathy, congestive heart failure, and calcification of the arteries. Not to mention muscle wasting, and potential kidney damage.

It eventually became a race to see which statin maker could lower cholesterol the most, based on the false premise that lower is somehow better. That was the whole basis of their marketing strategy – cholesterol poses a serious risk, and thus we must lower it, even if we totally destroy our health in the process. Of course, that issue was never discussed, and deliberately withheld. As a result, very few (including most doctors) have a clue regarding the tremendous potential that statins have for damaging both the body, and brain.

Anyone who looked at the statistics would have to question the justification of continuing the use of such dangerous drugs, with absolutely no proven benefit – not one! Although one thing we are all aware of is, reducing plaque in the arteries would without question be of benefit to everyone.

So, two companies thought they had found the answer, a way that together they could finally beat the competition, and corner the market, by robbing the body of cholesterol

two different ways, (it wouldn't stand a chance). Although it obviously wasn't their intention, the makers of Vytorin™ (a combination of two drugs - Lipitor™ by Merck, and Zetia™ by Schering-Plough) did to their dismay "unintentionally" prove that lower cholesterol (their claim to fame) is actually worse – not really better! They tried to produce a drug that would stop the liver from producing cholesterol (Lipitor's job), and also stop the body from retrieving any cholesterol from the intestines (Zetia's job). As it turned out, it was a rather dangerous idea, which totally backfired, big time!

Exactly what was discovered in the study conducted on Vytorin? Would you believe, **the plaque actually grew nearly twice as fast in the Vytorin™ group (Zetia™ and Lipitor™), as those taking Lipitor™ alone!** Yet, in spite of that amazing eye-opening discovery, doctors continue ignoring the fact that "lower is not really better", after all. Patients are still being challenged to do just that, by their doctors. Most importantly, there is more than one drug-free solution, proven to effectively reduce plaque (the real concern), and do so with absolutely no troubling side effects – just many side benefits!

Something Else To Consider – Where Is Our Protector, The FDA?

Although the trial with Vytorin™ was actually completed in April 2006, the results were not released until January 2008! Why nearly a 2-year delay, one might rightfully ask? The obvious conclusion – in 2007 the sale of Vytorin™ actually brought in nearly \$4 billion – and that's just in the U.S. alone, and in just one year. Then as usual, the FDA seems to have turned a blind eye to the obvious. Thus, millions are totally unaware that their rate of plaque has been rapidly increasing, possibly even leading to heart bypass surgery for some of the most vulnerable.

How could they possibly know they were being placed at an increased risk, from a drug that was instead supposed to be reducing their risk? The FDA somehow forgot to warn them. I would guess that it's rather difficult to warn the public, when a drug is bringing in that kind of money.

In spite of the fact that we now have proof that lowering cholesterol has no benefit whatsoever, but instead increases the development of plaque, and contributes to damage to both the body and brain, it was just announced on the national news that children as young as 2 years will now be tested for cholesterol, and 8-year-olds can now be prescribed statins.

The question is, who came up with that conclusion, and exactly what was their motivation? Would you believe, the decision actually came from the Academy of Pediatrics, which is incidentally well financed by pharmaceutical interests. Imagine that! And to think they are "supposed to be" responsible for looking out for our kids' best interest! As usual, the aggressive marketing tactics of the statin drug manufacturers were the driving force, and their generous contributors were the obvious incentive.

Now that we now know that more kids will soon be tested for, and placed on statins, it might be helpful to see what "benefits" our kids should now expect, (thanks to the Academy of Pediatrics)! And of course, we can't forget to thank the FDA, for their continuing compliance in the matter.

The Question Is: What Can Statins Possibly Do For Our Kids? More Than You Might Think – And You Definitely Won't Like The Results!

According to information provided on the website of Dr. Mercola, in his special report on cholesterol titled "The Low-Down on Cholesterol: Why You Need It", we find that "cognitive impairment, including memory loss" and "depression" were just two of several conditions discussed, which were linked with statin (cholesterol lowering) drugs.

Especially recently, the pharmaceutical giants have very aggressively, and I might add quite successfully, promoted antidepressants, and antipsychotic medications, for even very young children. For example, in one large study of 3.7 million children under age 18, conducted by the major pharmaceutical provider Scripts, Inc., it was discovered that in only four years' time, twice as many kids had been placed on antidepressants! Once again, it's all about increased sales by broadening the market, and there are a lot of kids out there.

The problem is, Zyprexa™ is well known for creating highly elevated blood sugar levels, leading to both diabetes, and rapid weight gain, in a very short period of time. To date, Eli Lilly has thus settled tens of thousands of lawsuits, filed by adults who had either experienced rapid weight gain, or developed diabetes, (or both), from taking Zyprexa™. Even though Eli Lilly is, without doubt, fully aware of the serious problems associated with Zyprexa™, they continue to aggressively market it for kids! Incidentally, Scripts conducted another study, two years after the original study regarding the number of kids being placed on antidepressants, and again on 3.7 million children under 18. They discovered that, in only four years' time, twice as many children were being placed on diabetes medication. One more huge study, using the very same database, and the same number of children. What a coincidence! Although Scripts is in the business of selling drugs, and were thus not attempting to make the connection, I am, and it has to be obvious. Not just Zyprexa™, but Prozac™ also contributes to diabetes – just not as fast. The problem is, they are often prescribed in combination, basically increasing the risk.

It soon becomes obvious that, once they begin placing younger kids, (and thus more kids), on statins, that would greatly increase the rate of kids experiencing depression – one side effect of statins. Then, the popular antidepressant Prozac™, by Eli Lilly, would be the most likely drug to be prescribed next. It's one of the most effective drugs I'm aware of for damaging a child's brain in more than one way, (something that statins can also promote). Prozac™ is also very effective in creating the bipolar disorder, for which another of Eli Lilly's drugs, the antipsychotic drug Zyprexa™, is normally prescribed. And finally, one side effect of Zyprexa™ is diabetes, which Eli Lilly also has medications for. It's easy to see what their marketing strategy obviously is. And now, placing more children on statins will greatly increase their sales.

And now, due to the recent decision to start testing and placing younger children on statins, it could start the typical domino effect of more drugs to treat side effects of the very first drug, such as a statin, prescribed to some child, and for what? To date, absolutely no benefit has been proven, although many serious side effects have – two issues that are never discussed in commercials, or by most doctors. It could easily remain a deep dark secret, unless we find a way to spread the word – my objective (and hopefully yours)!