

THE NUMBER ONE KILLER

Despite our increasing awareness and knowledge of the condition, cardiovascular disease (CVD) is Australia's leading cause of death. Science has identified a number of factors that increase the risk of CVD - these include elevated LDL (harmful cholesterol), high blood pressure, obesity, smoking and a lack of exercise. High cholesterol and high blood pressure account for 50% of all heart attacks; the other 50% are due to other, less obvious factors such as inflammation, stress, elevated homocysteine (a marker of B vitamin deficiency) and lack of protection from antioxidants.

NATURAL SOLUTIONS FOR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for CVD. Science has identified a number of natural substances which are just as effective as commonly used pharmaceutical drugs for lowering elevated blood pressure. The best news is that these natural supplements do not have many of the side-effects associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Natural supplements that can be used to assist in managing high blood pressure include the following:

- **Bonito Peptides:** One of the most effective natural remedies for elevated blood pressure is a group of nine peptides (proteins) derived from the Bonito tuna. These peptides have been shown to reduce blood pressure safely and quickly by blocking a key enzyme involved in driving blood pressure up.
- **Taurine and Magnesium:** A combination of magnesium and taurine is particularly effective for high blood

pressure that is associated with stress. These ingredients have been shown to help the body deal with stress more effectively and to safely assist in reducing high blood pressure. Taurine is also very good for improving how the liver deals with fats, which may be important if you have elevated cholesterol or triglycerides (fats in the blood).

- **Co-enzyme Q10 (CoQ10):** CoQ10 is a natural substance found in very high concentrations in your heart. Studies

NATURAL SOLUTIONS FOR HIGH CHOLESTEROL

If you have been told that you have elevated cholesterol or high triglycerides, then you will need to try and reduce these to protect your heart. Natural supplements that can be used to assist in managing high cholesterol and/or high triglycerides include:

- **Red Yeast Rice:** This is the fermentation product of rice upon which a particular red yeast has grown. Red yeast rice extract has been shown to dramatically and rapidly reduce elevated cholesterol levels. Some studies show that it makes a difference in as little as two weeks. Red yeast rice contains natural chemicals which are very similar to cholesterol lowering drugs called statins, except they have far fewer side-effects.
- **Policosanols:** Policosanols are a group of chemicals derived from sugar cane (but without the sugar) that have been shown to reduce harmful cholesterol and also increase beneficial cholesterol levels. In addition, they have the effect of reducing platelet aggregation or 'thinning the blood', in the same way as a low dose of aspirin.
- **DHA:** Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA) is an essential fatty acid found in fish oil, and recent research has proven that it is the main reason why people that eat more fish in their diet have a lower risk of heart disease. DHA can be

obtained in a purified liquid form, which has been shown to reduce harmful cholesterol, reduce blood pressure and also normalise heart rhythm.

- **Co-enzyme Q10 (CoQ10):** If you have elevated cholesterol and are taking medication for this, then CoQ10 is even more important to take. The most commonly used class of cholesterol medications are statins; these have the

unfortunate side-effect of reducing the manufacture of CoQ10 in the body. This means that people who are on statins have lower levels of CoQ10, which may be associated with side-effects such as fatigue, muscle aches and pains.

NATURAL SOLUTIONS FOR OTHER CVD RISK FACTORS

Other, less obvious contributors to CVD include inflammation, elevated homocysteine and reduced antioxidant levels. There are a number of natural compounds which have been shown to assist in managing these risk factors. For example:

- **Inflammation:** Any source of long-term inflammation (e.g. allergy, long-term infections or autoimmune diseases) can increase the risk of CVD. Inflammation has been shown to increase hardening of the blood vessels and the tendency of the blood to clot inside the body. Natural medicines that can help to reduce inflammation include rosemary, hops, ginger, turmeric, garlic and ginkgo.
- **Oxidation and free radical damage:** Free radicals are chemicals that can cause damage to tissues in the body and can contribute to hardening of the arteries and CVD. Antioxidants are natural substances that protect us from free radicals. Good antioxidants for the cardiovascular system include vitamin E, vitamin C, selenium, Resveratrol from the herb *Polygonum cuspidatum* and proanthocyanidins (OPC's) from Grapeseed.
- **Elevated homocysteine:** Homocysteine is an amino acid that can be found in the blood. Scientific studies

have shown that too much homocysteine in the blood is related to a higher risk of CVD. Folic acid, vitamin B6 and vitamin B12 help break down homocysteine in the body so supplementing your diet with these essential nutrients is important for promoting cardiovascular health.



LIFESTYLE & DIET SOLUTIONS FOR CVD

As well as using these natural supplements to reduce your risk of CVD and optimise your cardiovascular health, a healthy lifestyle is critical. Smoking and obesity are two of the greatest risk factors for CVD - if either of these apply to you, then your Practitioner has tools and techniques that can



assist you in dealing with issues. In addition, regular aerobic exercise such as brisk walking for 45 to 60 minutes per day is very helpful. Dietary tips that can help include:

- Eat a diet that is based on fruits and vegetables and lean protein such as chicken and fish.
- Limit white, refined breads and cereal products, reduce your salt intake and minimise alcohol.
- Avoid deep fried foods, margarine, butter, fatty meats and all sugars and sweets.
- Drink six to eight glasses of water a day.

If you want to explore any of these natural solutions in more detail, please discuss this with your Practitioner.

References available upon request.

A HEALTHY HEART



RECOMMENDATIONS AND TREATMENTS FOR ACHIEVING A HEALTHY HEART

For more information ask your Practitioner about treatments for a Healthy Heart.



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