Most of us have inherited certain physiological weaknesses that may require ongoing attention and as we get older certain issues tend to arise that need specific requirements.

## Cholesterol Imbalance and the Nutrients that Naturally Treat this Condition

Contrary to what you have probably been told there is no such thing as bad cholesterol. The low-density lipoprotein or LDL acts as a lubricant of your circulatory system to avoid abrasion from the constant blood flow. The high- density lipoprotein or HDL acts as a solvent of the other to prevent a continuous buildup that could produce plaques and potentially blocked arteries.

Indeed, both types of cholesterol are very good and without them we would soon die. The right ratio between the two types of cholesterol is the most important aspect of these numbers. Ideally you want your total cholesterol to be at or below 200 mg/dl and your HDL at or above 455mg/dl.

Cholesterol is also a precursor to steroid hormones and because of this there is a saying "the more testosterone the less cholesterol." Recent research suggests that while the normal level of testosterone is very different for both men and women, a high normal testosterone level protects the heart.

The traditional treatment for cholesterol consists of Diet, Exercise, Statin Drugs.

## Diet

The general recommendation is to decrease or eliminate fat intake, avoid food high in cholesterol, increase complex carbohydrate consumption, and decrease meat intake. This may sound good but for the most part it, is counter-productive. The body needs fat to be healthy, albeit the right type of fat, not fatty food. Approximately 93% of cholesterol is produced in the body, so avoiding cholesterol food does not make much difference.

The consumption of carbohydrates increases insulin production. This leads often to insulin resistance which increases the production of triglycerides. This, in turn, raises cholesterol production and tends to make many people fat. And as we know, excessive weight produces more stress on the cardiovascular system. So, exercise conscious eating: avoid fast food and excess carbohydrates (starch, sugar and alcohol).

## Exercise

In moderation, exercise raises the HDL level, improves circulation, strengthens the heart, and helps in lymphatic drainage and detoxification. It also maintains healthy muscle and healthy bones. This obviously is a very good idea, which should be included in every health maintenance program.

## Red Yeast Rice

Medical statin drugs are effective but they have potential side effects that can be disastrous. Liver deterioration is one, chronic gastrointestinal disorder is the second, and muscle loss is the third. There is an effective natural statin called Red Yeast Rice, but like all statin drugs, it reduces CoQ10, a critical nutrient of the heart, and may cause serious gastrointestinal disorders.

Red Yeast Rice contains a type of statin call Lovastatin, and because statins are regulated pharmaceutical drugs, the FDA has decided that Red Yeast Rice should not be sold by herbal companies. The paradox, of course, is that it is all over the Internet but the manufacturers cannot make any claim nor tell you the actual amount of Lovastatin in their products. The result is that many Red Yeast Rice products are totally ineffective while some practitioner lines actually offer Red Yeast Rice that works.

My personal experience with myself and my clients is that Red Yeast Rice can be very effective. What I would suggest is that your alternative health provider recommend a product from a professional product’s line that has been tested in their practice. The second recommendation is have regular cholesterol checks to make sure that it is actually producing the desired results. As with all health resources, pharmaceutical or natural, the proof is in the pudding not in somebody’s opinion. A condition like cholesterol is symptom free. The only way to know if the method you are using works is to have regular blood tests.

**Recommended Products**:

* Xymogen: Red Yeast Rice
* Thorne : Red Yeast Rice

## Policosanol

As we saw above, Statin drugs are conventional medicine’s standard for the treatment of high cholesterol. However they are associated with possible side effects and interfere with the production of critical nutrients, in particular CoQ10, a critical heart nutrient.

### Policosanol Lowers Cholesterol and LDL and Raises HDL

Policosanol is a natural cholesterol reducer made from sugar cane. A review article published in the American Heart Journal reported that: “At doses of 10 to 20 mg per day, policosanol lowers total cholesterol by 17% to 21%, LDL cholesterol by 21% to 29%, and raises HDL cholesterol by 8% to 15%. A daily dose of 10 mg of policosanol have been shown to be as effective at lowering total or LDL cholesterol as (Zocor) or (Pravachol) ( 2 frequently prescribed medical drugs) At dosages of up to 20 mg per day, policosanol is safe and well tolerated.”

### How Does Policosanol Work?

Policosanol has been shown to protect against the oxidation of LDL cholesterol. This oxidation creates a chronic inflammatory process which promotes the destruction of blood vessels. Oxidized LDL cholesterol also contributes to plaque formation by triggering thrombosis and by impairing vasodilation of the arteries. All of these factors contribute to the progression of atherosclerosis and increases the risk of a heart attack, stroke, and intermittent claudication.

## Gugulipids

Guggulipid is made from the gum resin of the Commiphora mukul tree that grows mainly in India. These substances are known as Z-guggulsterone and E-guggulsterone. Guggulipids work by increasing our liver’s ability to metabolize LDL or "bad" cholesterol.

Guggulipids have been used for centuries in India as part of the Ayurvedic medicine tradition, and since the 1960’s it has been well researched for the treatment of lipid disorders: high LDL, low HDL and high triglycerides. Guggulipids have been shown to lower serum cholesterol and triglycerides as well as lower LDL and raise HDL. Guggulipids have been found to increase bile secretion and decrease cholesterol synthesis.

There have been many studies performed on guggulipids and cholesterol, and the results are outstanding. Overall, guggulipids were found to lower cholesterol levels just as well as prescription drugs, but without any bothersome side effects. They also had a beneficial effect on triglycerides and HDL. In addition, animal studies involving guggulipids found it to be completely non-toxic.

It has also been shown in experiments to stimulate thyroid function which is often linked to sugar and fat metabolism.

**Recommended Product**:

* Health Concerns: polilipid

## Plant Sterols

Plant sterols are plant components that have a chemical structure similar to cholesterol. However, plant sterol absorption in humans is considerably less than that of cholesterol. The beneficial physiologic effects of plant sterols could be further enhanced by combining them with other beneficial substances, such as olive and fish oils, fibers, and soy proteins. The addition of plant sterols to the diet is suggested by health experts as a safe and effective way to reduce the risk of coronary heart disease.

**Recommended Product**:

* Douglas Laboratories : CardioEdge

## Niacin

Niacin has been shown to lower LDL cholesterol, Lp(a) lipoprotein, triglyceride, and fibrinogen levels while simultaneously raising HDL cholesterol levels.

**The preferred form of Niacin**: Niacin has a tendency to produce strong flushing effect (turn your skin very red and itchy). A form of Niacin which does not flush is Inosito Hexaniacinate. It is very well tolerated.

**The Benefits**: Numerous medical and university studies have shown that Niacin lowers overall cholesterol levels. These studies show that Niacin reduces the bad cholesterol (LDL) by 10-20%, reduces triglycerides (fat in the blood) by 20-50%, and raises the good cholesterol (HDL) by 15 to 35%.

**How does it work**: It inhibits the liver from creating the building blocks of the bad cholesterol (VLDL) and thus as a result the bad cholesterol naturally drops. Virtually every study done on Niacin has shown it to increase good cholesterol HDL. The latter pick up the excess bad cholesterol LDL in your blood and takes it back to your liver for disposal. The higher the good cholesterol, the less bad cholesterol you’ll have in your blood.

## Other Benefits

Niacin lower Lipoprotein (a), is a genetic cloting factor not effectively addressed by other cholesterol lowering products. The lowering effect of Lp(a), depending on studies, is situated between 35 and 38 %

**Potential side effects**: To be effective Niacin has to be taken in large quantities, from 1000 mg to 3000 mg daily. Some possible side effects are gastric irritation, nausea, and very rarely liver damage. It is also not recommended for individuals with high blood pressure. Monitoring liver enzymes twice a year is recommended.

**Recommended Product**:

* Pure Encapsulation Niacitol

## Essential Fatty acid Omeg 3 and Cholesterol

Omega 3 fatty acids are poly-unsaturated fatty acids. Studies show that a diet rich in omega 3 fatty acids may help lower triglycerides and increase HDL cholesterol (the good cholesterol). Whenever the HDL level is raised, the negative side effect of LDL cholesterol is decreased. Omega 3 fatty acids may also act as an anticoagulant to prevent blood from clotting. Several other studies also suggest that these fatty acids may help lower high blood pressure, another common cardio-vascular risk.

**Recommendation:**

* 2000mg for women and 3000mg for men.

### Tocotrienols and Cholesterol Reduction

Most of the research on tocotrienols has been focused on their ability to reduce cholesterol.

In one double blind cross-over study, serum concentrations of cholesterol decreased by an astonishing 31% in some of the study subjects in the short period of four weeks. Many of the major medications used to control cholesterol work by suppressing the liver's ability to manufacture the cholesterol, and therefore some of their most serious side-effects are connected with damage to the liver.

  It appears that the pathway by which Tocotrienols control cholesterol has to do with suppressing an enzyme called HMG-CoA reductase, and therefore they also suppress the liver's cholesterol manufacturing rate, but fortunately without any of the accompanying side effects.

Other studies have found that the antioxidant action of Tocotrienols' decreases atherosclerosis, the damage from free radicals in the walls of the arteries. A study at the Kenneth L. Jordan Heart Fund in 1993 showed that Tocotrienols significantly decreased plasma cholesterol, LDLs, and VLDLs, which are the main causes of plaques build up in the arteries.

**Recommended Product**

* Douglas Laboratories, CardioEdge

As you can see there are many natural health resources available to treat lipid disorders. The choice depends on the specific imbalance and how each person responds. As a rule I start with our foundational formula, The Prime Formula, and add the products with no side effects, like the Polilipid, which is a combination of policosanol and guggulipids, or the CardioEedge, a combination of plant sterols and tocotrienals. I add to this the Omega 3. If people need more support I might use either Red yeast Rice or Niacitol.

There is also a product from Natural which includes all the products mentioned above. Of course the more comprehensive the treatment, the higher the cost, so I also look at what people can afford.