Cholesterol’s “Silent Partner”

A statin-free blueprint for avoiding heart attack and stroke

By Fred Pescatore, M.D.
If there’s one thing history has taught us, it’s that the wheels of medicine grind at a painfully slow pace.

Up until the mid-nineteenth century it was commonplace for doctors to move from patient to patient, surgery to surgery without once washing their hands.

When a young Hungarian doctor named Ignaz Philipp Semmelweis presented evidence that infection and disease could be greatly reduced by doctor’s simply washing their hands between patients, the medical community scoffed. Many even took offense at the suggestion and eventually Semmelweis was laughed out of medicine. It was years after Semmelweis’ death in a Hungarian insane asylum that his theory was finally proven correct and slowly implemented into common medical practice.

Likewise, in the 1960’s a brilliant doctor and researcher named Albert Sabin invented an oral vaccine for Polio which was superior to the injectable Salk vaccine in three separate ways. Again, the medical community turned a blind eye and Sabin eventually left America to treat patients in Russia, Mexico and Singapore to prove his vaccine’s superiority. It took five long years and hundreds of millions of successful inoculations overseas before Sabin’s now ubiquitous sugar cube Polio vaccine was finally accepted into widespread medical practice in America.

And now, in the 21st century it appears we’re at another medical crossroads in terms of the importance of cholesterol as a major risk factor for heart disease.

Much like the stubborn philosophies that were ingrained in medical thinking of the past, the idea of cholesterol as the foremost predictor of heart attack and stroke is likewise believed and repeated among doctors of today without so much as a second thought.

Further compounding this belief is a modern pharmaceutical industry with a $20 billion yearly stake in the widespread acceptance of cholesterol management as the be-all end-all in terms of avoiding heart attacks and stroke.

But even in the face of such insurmountable odds, studies are coming to light which both directly challenge the overall importance of cholesterol and point to a second and much more dangerous component to heart disease.

Colossal cracks in the case for cholesterol

In 2009, the American Heart Association published a Harvard University study which began to raise eyebrows among enlightened doctors across the country.

The study, one of the largest of its kind, involved 1,315 physicians and over 17,500 men and women in 26 different countries. Though many important findings were made in the study’s five years of research, one of the most astonishing facts was something the statin industry would prefer you never heard at all.

Shockingly, the study found that, “of the nearly 1.7 million heart attacks and strokes that occur annually in the United States, more than half occur among apparently healthy men and women with average or low levels of cholesterol.”

So there must be another, more important factor involved in heart attacks and stroke that raises risk regardless of cholesterol levels. More on that in a moment.

Another study which raised serious questions as to the importance of cholesterol was the Lyon
Diet Heart Study.

The study, also published by the American Heart Association, involved over 400 men and women who had already experienced a heart attack. The participants were split into two groups: A control group which adopted a traditional “heart healthy” diet focused on lowering cholesterol. And an experimental group which adopted an altogether different diet.

To the surprise of mainstream doctors everywhere, after 46 months the group not following the traditional diet managed to lower their overall risk of heart disease between 50%-70% without lowering their cholesterol levels one bit! (I’ll discuss the unbelievable way they did this in minute.) These results were so surprising that the doctors involved decided to stop the study early for moral reasons because the risk of heart disease remained so high for the control group.

These two high-profile studies published by the American Heart Association (of all places!) teach us two important things that completely fly in the face of mainstream medical thinking.

1. Even with perfect cholesterol levels the odds of suffering a devastating heart attack or stroke are still over 50%.

2. It is entirely possible to drastically reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke without lowering your cholesterol.

So for now, let’s focus on the surprisingly overlooked reason that makes that first statement true and then get into exactly how you can quickly and easily accomplish the second.

**Cholesterol’s “Silent Partner”**

Around the same time that Harvard University published its study revealing that increased cholesterol levels were found in less than 50% of all heart attack and stroke victims, researchers at the World Health Organization published a study which pointed to an overlooked risk factor that seemed to account for the other half.

It was a blood marker known as **Fibrinogen**. Now don’t feel bad if you’ve never heard of fibrinogen, most doctors you’ll talk to these days likely haven’t either. In fact, in their own words, the World Health Organization describes this crucial blood marker as being “almost forgotten by the clinical community.”

But by publishing this groundbreaking study they hoped to both remind mainstream medicine of the vital importance of this risk factor and set standards for measuring its levels in patients.

Now, to understand just how dangerous excess levels of this blood marker can be we must first look at how it works in your bloodstream.

**Anatomy of a heart attack**

Fibrinogen is a protein produced by the liver and in small quantities it is an absolutely vital and necessary component for survival.

When you cut or scrape your skin, fibrinogen is the agent which causes the blood to congeal and eventually create a scab which clots the wound altogether. It also works on a molecular level in much the same way, by clotting small stress-related cracks and crevices in your arteries.

The problem begins when levels of fibrinogen become elevated. When this occurs, instead of creating a small clot to repair an artery imperfection, the fibrinogen begins to work overtime creating a much larger clot than is needed. These oversized clots can grow to the point where they close off veins, blood vessels or major arteries.
entirely and cause devastating heart attacks and stroke.

To put this in simpler terms: A heart attack or stroke is caused by a clot which shuts off blood flow in a vein or artery and a clot is caused by excess fibrinogen. Now to be fair, excess amounts of cholesterol can latch onto these clots making them bigger and speeding the process…but the clot forms regardless of cholesterol levels in the blood.

That is exactly why the World Health Organization study stated that “the risk of high cholesterol levels strongly depends on concomitant high fibrinogen levels. In contrast, the risk calculated for high fibrinogen is fairly independent of the cholesterol concentration.”

This is also why the same study concluded that testing for and management of fibrinogen in the bloodstream could be even “more important than cholesterol and lipoproteins.”

And this is far from the first study to point out the danger of excess fibrinogen. Another Harvard University Study published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology found that “Those with high fibrinogen levels had a **twofold** increase in myocardial infarction (heart attack) risk.”

And still another study published in the prestigious Royal College of General Practitioners found that when coupled with other heart-health risk factors such as cholesterol and high blood pressure, “incidence of heart attacks was respectively six times and 12 times greater in those with high plasma fibrinogen levels than in those with low fibrinogen levels.”

In other words, even if you have high cholesterol or high blood pressure you’re respectively 600% and 1200% less likely to suffer a heart attack if your fibrinogen levels are in line!

Which brings us to the main question:

**How can you control fibrinogen levels?**

Alarmingly, this is a question that mainstream medicine has so far been unable to answer. In fact, the peer reviewed website www.labtestsonline.org states that tests for fibrinogen levels have “not gained widespread acceptance because there are no direct treatments for elevated levels.”

Other studies have also found that mainstream clot-busters like aspirin and warfarin have absolutely no effect on fibrinogen levels.

If fact, in my own practice I’ve found that these drugs actually tend to **increase** fibrinogen levels in patients.

Luckily, however, nature has provided us with a method to quickly and easily control levels of fibrinogen and in turn slash your risk of heart attack and stroke. I’ll get to that in a moment, but first let’s talk about how to find out if you need this natural intervention at all.

**Assessing your risk:**

**The first step to slashing it!**

Your levels of fibrinogen can be easily tested by any doctor simply by asking for what’s called a **fibrinogen activity test**. Currently, many doctors will only perform this test if you’re displaying excessive bleeding (a rare sign of low fibrinogen levels) or if you have already formed a blood clot (the after-effect of excess fibrinogen). However, your doctor should be able to easily add a fibrinogen activity test to your regular blood work. All you have to do is ask!

Generally, I like to see my patients’ fibrinogen levels under 300 mg/dl. If your levels are lower I’d continue to get your levels tested
around twice a year. If higher, you should get your levels tested every three months.

But more importantly, if you have high levels of fibrinogen you should take steps to get that number down to acceptable levels.

The cardiovascular cure-all that’s stunning science

Earlier in this report I mentioned the Lyon Diet Heart Study. If you’ll remember, the experimental group in that study was able to lower their overall risk of heart disease by an astonishing 50%-70% without lowering their cholesterol levels. And remember, these were patients who had already suffered a heart attack so their risk levels at the beginning of this study were through the roof!

So how did they do it?

The experimental group was told to follow a strict Mediterranean diet. And doctors found that the primary reason for the improved health of these participants can be attributed directly to the high levels of Omega-3 fatty acids found in this diet.

So it’s no surprise that Omega 3’s are one of the only proven natural substances I know of that can quickly and effectively lower your levels of fibrinogen in the bloodstream.

In fact, yet another study published by the American Heart Association found that Omega 3’s can lower your levels of this deadly blood marker as much as 13.2%.

And as we discussed earlier, getting your levels of fibrinogen down can lower your overall risk of heart diseases an eye-popping 600%-1200%!

Of course, the heart healthy benefits of Omega 3’s don’t stop with fibrinogen. The benefits of this fabulous fatty acid are vast and well documented. One meta-analysis which reviewed close to two dozen separate studies on Omega 3’s found that this amazing fatty acid improved CRP, Triglycerides, blood pressure and cholesterol levels. But it didn’t stop there, Omega 3’s were also linked to improvements in depression, memory and even Alzheimer’s Disease!

So how do you get more Omega 3s?

First, you can start eating foods which are rich in Omega 3’s such as salmon, mackerel and sardines. Also eat plenty of nuts and seeds such as macadamia nuts, pecans, walnuts, and flaxseeds. And use macadamia nut oil, estate-bottled olive oil, and avocado oil.

Also, I always recommend that my patients supplement with 3,000 mg of fish oil daily (one that contains EPA and DHA).

And finally, as per the Lyon Diet Heart Study you can make a significant dent in your fibrinogen levels by following a Mediterranean Diet—which is exactly what my New Hamptons Health Miracle is…only with the added benefit of an emphasis on the use of macadamia nut oil over olive oil.

It’s the easiest and most enjoyable diet there is to follow, hands down. For all the details, see volume 3 of your free bonus library: Diabetes-Free in Just 6 WEEKS. This volume will provide all the steps to having success with my New Hamptons Health Miracle—no matter what your health concerns may be.

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