

Physical and Emotional Aspects of Heart Disease Causes, Prevention, and an Integrative Treatment Approach

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Atherosclerotic heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the U.S., claiming nearly 700,000 lives per year. Despite record amounts of healthcare dollars spent in the U.S. for this problem outcome measures are poorer than many other industrialized countries spending far less on interventions and pharmaceuticals.

I. Physical Causes:

- A. Inflammation-The basic pathophysiologic mechanism causing heart attacks.
Have you had your HS-CRP measured lately?
 1. Occult Infection-systemic, dental especially
 2. Toxicity-lead, mercury, iron and others
 3. Insulin Resistance Syndrome and Diabetes-lead to glycosylation end products
 4. Cholesterol-is the heart cholesterol hypothesis real...? Sixty percent of all heart attacks occur in people with “normal” cholesterol levels.
 5. Smoking-creates inflammation and increased viscosity
- B. Dietary Factors
 1. Nutrient Deficiency-especially antioxidants deficiency: fruits and veggies have half the antioxidant content of foods fifty years ago
 2. High Fat Diets-beyond trans fats
 3. High Homocysteine-due to low B6/B12/folate levels in diet
- C. Immune System Dysregulation
 1. Aging creates increasing coagulability with the blood
 2. Scar Tissue Formation

II. Mental/Emotional Contributors:

- A. Stress-increases sympathetic nervous system activity and raises blood pressure through release of epinephrine (adrenalin)/can damage arterial lining
 1. Chronic stress is a common and treatable problem and leads to hypertension.
 2. Insulin resistance and hyperglycemia often are the results of stress.
- B. Depression is a known risk factor for heart disease.
- C. Type A personalities have higher heart attack rates-this is partly due to higher perceived stress but also controlling (constricting) behavior.
- D. T.C.M.-relates heart disease to lack of joy
 1. Fear-which is the emotion associated with the kidneys and is the water element which sedates the fire (heart) element.
 2. Left sided arm pain which is a hallmark warning sign of heart attack is explained on the basis of acupuncture meridians.

III. Signs and Symptoms of Heart Disease or Vascular Dysfunction:

- A. Chest Pain-usually exertional, lasts up to five minutes; relieved with rest
- B. Shortness of Breath-cardiac asthma
- C. Swelling in the legs from decrease cardiac output.
- D. Fatigue or cold extremities-usually due to decrease circulation
- E. Erectile dysfunction
- F. Rapid resting heart rate or hypertension.
- G. Plaque Buildup/Loss of Teeth

IV. Prevention and Treatment:

A. Diet

- 1. Fruits/Veggies-high potassium/sodium ratio
- 2. Adequate water intake-may reduce risk of heart attack by fifty percent.
- 3. Avoid foods with nitrates (i.e. bacon, hot dogs, etc.)
- 4. Balance your fat intake and do not overheat cooking oils, fry foods or cook meat at high temperatures.
- 5. Avoid sugar and high carb intake because of excessive insulin production.

B. Exercise

- 1. Cardio, strengthening and stretching through Yoga
 - a. Balances nervous system
 - b. Decreases blood pressure and heart rate
 - c. Reduces blood sugar and insulin
 - d. Maintains vascular flow

C. Nutrients to consider; depends on the individual circumstance.

- 1. Decrease clotting potential (anticoagulant)
 - a. Vitamin E: 400-1600 IU's per day
 - b. Arginine: 2000-6000 mg per day
 - c. Ascorbic Acid: 1000-4000 mg per day
 - d. Bromelain/Pancreation/other enzymes
 - e. Turmeric (curcuma longa)
 - f. EFA's-flax/fish
 - g. Magnesium: 400-800 mg per day
 - h. Inositol: 400-3000 mg per day
- 2. Vascular Flow and Vasodilatation
 - a. Arginine: 3000-6000 mg per day
 - b. Garlic: 400-600 mg per day
 - c. Hawthorne: 160-250 mg per day
 - d. Horse Chestnut: 600-700 mg per day
 - e. Co Q 10: 100-300 mg per day
- 3. Lipid Modulation
 - a. Pantethine (B5): 500-1000 mg per day
 - b. Garlic
 - c. L-Carnitine: 1000-3000 mg per day

- d. EFA's
 - e. For high Lipoprotein a-use inositol, CoQ 10, vitamin C, L-Lysine Proline
 - f. High Homocysteine-B6, B12, folate, TMG, choline
4. Insulin Resistance and Diabetes
- a. Fiber
 - b. Chromium: 800 mg per day
 - c. Vanadium: 10-50 mg per day
 - d. Cinnamon: ½ tsp. 3 times per day
 - e. CLA: 1-3 grams per day
 - f. EFA's
 - g. Magnesium
5. Antioxidants to protect against Free Radical Drainage
- a. A, C, E, S (selenium)
6. Anti-inflammatory
- a. Enzymes-Pancreation, Bromelain, Papain, Lumbrokinase
 - b. EFA's
 - c. Turmeric
 - d. Vitamin C
7. For severe disease consider EDTA in addition to the above.