

Inflammation: “The Fire Inside”

April, 2022

By Dr. Derek Conte

When President Eisenhower suffered a heart attack in 1955, the country was shaken. Biochemist and physiologist, Ansel Keys, launched an international study to discover if diet was related to heart attacks. Keys said he found a correlation between Nordic populations who consumed more animal proteins containing cholesterol (eggs, meat, and cheese) and higher rates of heart disease than their Mediterranean counterparts who consumed less red meat and more vegetables, fruit, olive oil and lower rates of heart attacks.

The problem with Keyes’ study was that he included only six of the 21 countries he studied in his published findings, omitting 15 countries. This gave him the result he wanted: that animal fat caused cardiovascular disease. What followed was the intense and ubiquitous “diet-heart/cholesterol bad” campaign begun in the 1950’s and still being advanced today.

Americans have since been urged use margarine instead of butter, corn oil instead of lard, have eaten much less meat, much less whole milk, eggs and cheese, have replaced fats and meats with carbohydrates for their calories, and have exercised much more. We have sought to reduce cholesterol levels to save lives with diet, exercise and statin medications. The question is, is the cholesterol in animal fat really the major cause of heart disease?

<https://pix-media.priceonomics-media.com/blog/547/availability-added-fats.png>

The better model for cardiovascular disease is inflammation, which has been around for years but little discussed. The thing that struck me most in the literature I read acknowledging inflammation as the primary cause of CVD gave little mention to what actually caused the inflammation in the first place.

So what causes a state of inflammation in the body? Many things: a diet dependent on white bread, white rice, pasta, potatoes, vegetable oils and sugars, leading to diabetes, an autoimmune disorder. Stress, smoking and exposure to environmental and food toxins are also major causes of inflammation.

Inflammation is the result of an injury to bodily tissues. Inflammation is the body’s attempt to heal from an injury. Inflammation begins the formation of plaque in our vessels. When there is an injury, platelets become active and form clots and cholesterol acts as a salve to the wounds. Cholesterol is present in vessels because of inflammation... not the other way around.

The fact is that we require cholesterol to live. Cholesterol makes up a large part of our brain and nervous system tissue and is a vital part of our all cellular membranes and essential in the production of hormones like estrogen, progesterone, testosterone and aldosterone. That is why the liver makes cholesterol every day.

1) Here is a very interesting review of studies on the subject of cholesterol and health: “Higher LDL-Cholesterol is Associated with Greater Longevity”:

<https://www.meddocsonline.org/annals-of-epidemiology-and-public-health/the-LDL-paradox-higher-LDL-cholesterol-is-associated-with-greater-longevity.pdf>

2) Here is a marvelous lecture on the subject of cholesterol, statin drugs and heart disease:

David Diamond on Deception in Cholesterol Research: Separating Truth From Profitable Fiction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inwfSkSGvQw>

3) Another excellent source on this topic is “The Big Fat Surprise”, a book by Nina Teicholz.

Dr. Derek Conte is co-founder of Chiropractic Specialists at 1154v Concord Road in Smyrna. For questions, call 404-784-6008. For more articles, photos, info, go to: drderekconte.com