

# Preventing Heart Disease

How does your heart reflect the state of your life? Your relationships? Heart disease is the number one cause of death for both men and women. Cardiovascular (CVD) disease generally refers to coronary artery disease which is a chronic disease in which the coronary arteries gradually become hardened and narrow.

The coronary arteries supply blood to the heart muscle. Each of us may know someone who died in their forties or fifties from a heart attack without any warning. Ninety percent of coronary artery disease is asymptomatic, which is why it is referred to as the "silent killer." Women have been undertreated for heart disease for two reasons; one their symptoms are different from men, and two, they were often discounted as psychological. The typical symptoms for a man include shortness of breath, mid-chest pressure, pain in the left arm, profuse sweating, dull pain between the shoulder blades. Women often present with indigestion, sudden profound fatigue, vague chest



*All's Well*  
Health for Body, Mind, Spirit

by Moira Fitzpatrick, PhD, ND

discomfort, breathlessness, jaw, neck or upper back pain. Since CVD is a silent killer, it is important to listen to your body, your intuition and seek help.

### What causes heart disease?

Identified risk factors include a family history of early heart disease, age, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, smoking, physical inactivity. Inflammation has been identified as the most important factor contributing to the build-up of plaque in the arteries. Inflammation is what occurs when we injure ourselves. It is what causes a bruise to swell. However,

when inflammation becomes chronic it leads to disease. Plaque in the arteries is an inflammatory injury that swells along the inside of the arterial wall. The immune system responds to the inflammation, which results in a pro-inflammatory process, where one of the substances C-reactive protein is abundantly present. C-reactive

protein stimulates cells to release tissue factor, a protein central to the clotting process. The growing plaque becomes like a boil inside the blood vessel that damages the endothelium of the vessel.

### What contributes to inflammation?

Some contributors to inflammation include lifestyle and the environment. The overconsumption of sugar often results in insulin resistance, the hormone produced by the pancreas that brings glucose and fat into the cells for energy. When glucose cannot get

into the cells both glucose and triglycerides build up in the blood. Gum disease is an inflammatory condition caused by bacteria. This infection stresses the immune system and statistics show a significant relationship between both gingivitis and CVD and an even higher relationship with periodontitis. Heavy metals including lead, cadmium and mercury affect our enzyme systems and cause significant

free radical stress, which contributes to inflammation and the formation of plaque. Emotional stress including anger, hostility, depression, anxiety and lack of social support contribute to chronic stress, elevated cortisol and imbalances in the stress-relaxation response. Other stressors may include financial, marital, hating your job and dreading Monday mornings.

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## My 60th Birthday

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I just want to recommend that you consider this at some point in your life as a celebration of who you are. The freedom and feeling of not hiding are significant. I feel younger, like several years of energetic holding on were swept away as she cleaned the floor of the salon following my appointment.

Everyone hugged me on the way out. My stylist said

it had been an honor. Great way to celebrate 60 years on the planet.

*Rebecca Singer is a Shamanic healer, offering healing session and workshops internationally. Her website is www.shamanicenergy.com. She is in Seattle every four to six weeks to work with clients. Please e-mail her if you would like to receive her monthly newsletter.*

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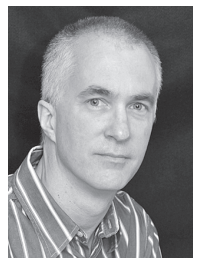
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## Preventing Heart Disease

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### What can I do to prevent heart disease?

The foundation of prevention is an anti-inflammatory diet, exercise, and stress reduction. An anti-inflammatory diet includes fruits, high in antioxidants such as berries, prunes, red grapes and vegetables such as kale, spinach, broccoli, asparagus, Brussels sprouts, wild water fish, olive oil, whole grains, nuts, seeds, soy, garlic, limited chicken, turkey, lamb and grass-fed beef. Be mindful of your tolerance for carbohydrates with insulin resistance and hypoglycemia. I recommend working up to 60 minutes of moderate exercise every day. De-stressing may include learning to meditate, deep breathing, learning to identify and eliminate negative thinking, seek a support group,

obtain counseling for anger management or partner discord, learn self-hypnosis, learn to relax, obtain meaningful work, take time to play and notice the beginnings of spring as life is emerging from the earth at this time of year.

### What tests should I ask for when seeking medical care?

I recommend a cholesterol panel, high sensitive C-reactive protein, Lipoprotein(a), triglycerides, ferritin, fibrinogen, fasting glucose, hemoglobin A1C if you are insulin resistant and have high blood sugar. Additionally, obtain a screening EKG and an exercise treadmill test.

### What are some basic supplements to support my heart?

The foundation of any supplement program is a

multi-vitamin/mineral. Fish oil is anti-inflammatory, improves endothelial function and decreases both triglycerides and blood pressure. One gram is preventative. Magnesium is a major player in many enzyme reactions in the body and it relaxes muscles including the muscle walls of the arteries. Since alcohol, soft drinks and stress contribute to magnesium deficiency, the dosage for you may need to be individualized. A good prevention dose is 400mg. Recent research points to the benefits of Resveratrol as an antioxidant and it appears to suppress pro-oxidative genes, plus inducing anti-oxidative enzymes. Research findings suggest that Bilberry juice modulates inflammation. Vitamin C reverses endothelial dysfunction, helps to decrease inflammation and is useful in controlling blood pressure. I recommend at least 1000mg a day for prevention. Hawthorne is well known for emotional healing and adjunctive

treatment for congestive heart failure.

There are specific supplements which boost cellular energy. Some include CoQ10, D-ribose, and L-carnitine. CoQ10 supports individuals with heart disease, helps to reduce blood pressure, is protective against gum disease and is anti-oxidant. CoQ10 is recommended if you take a statin. D-ribose is a sugar that replenishes ATP or cellular energy stores. It is useful for athletes, fibromyalgia, congestive heart failure and CVD.

Let us listen to our hearts, take time for health and live this life with joy.

*Moirra Fitzpatrick is a naturopathic physician and licensed clinical psychologist, who practices in the Northgate area of Seattle. She is a primary care provider, specializes in the unique health concerns of women and functional holistic medicine. Dr. Fitzpatrick can be reached at (206) 525-5576, www.theemeraldcenter.com.*

## Letters to the Editor

Hi Krysta,

Greetings from Thailand... just got the February issue of New Spirit Journal. Wow, best ever. Especially loved "Peace Beloveds." I feel that we are on the cusp of ushering in a new age of higher consciousness.

Have been in somewhat of an energy-spiritual black hole and have lost sight of that. Thanks for plugging me back in to the "real" reality.

Best wishes and thank you.

— Jerry White

**Koh Tao, Thailand and Port Angeles, Wash.**

*[You are most welcome and thanks for writing. —Krysta]*

Dear Krysta and the New Spirit Journal Community, Yes, I want to renew my subscription!

I appreciate your compassionate and inclusive format. You seem to allow all (with thoughtful discernment) to write, review, report, and interview. This means not only those folks who are "established new age thinkers" but also those who are blossoming spiritual journalists can share with the rest of us.

I feel this makes your newspaper refreshing. We are all so important! Thank you for giving everyone a voice. Peace, love, and happiness.

—Tui Mullen

*[This inclusiveness is part of what makes New Spirit Journal a true community newspaper. Thanks for your acknowledgement and the renewal to your subscription. —Krysta]*

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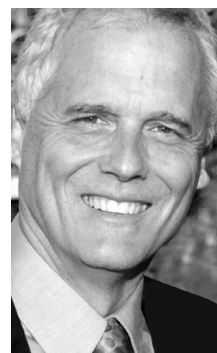
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