



# Seven Keys to Heart Health

## Keep Your Heart Healthy and Overcome Common Heart Problems with Natural Remedies

Heart disease remains the leading cause of death in civilized nations and you, like many people, may be concerned about keeping your heart healthy. Unfortunately, much of what people believe about preventing heart disease is out-of-date information.

For instance, the idea that avoiding cholesterol and animal fats will reduce your risk of heart disease simply isn't true. Cholesterol and animal fats are not the cause of heart disease. Cholesterol only sticks to your arteries when it becomes oxidized from free radical damage and eating animal fats is not the cause of high cholesterol.

The truth is that processed vegetable oils, not animal fats, are what increase your risk of hardening of the arteries. Furthermore, a high sugar diet and the high levels of insulin it produces are one of the biggest risk factors for heart disease, far more problematic than fats.

More recent research shows that heart disease, like most degenerative diseases, is primarily caused by chronic inflammation and free radical damage to the lining of the arteries. This also causes the oxidation of cholesterol that leads to arterial plaque. Furthermore, there's no magic pill you can take to prevent this. Supplements and herbs may help, but the prevention of heart disease also requires adopting diet and lifestyle changes.

So, in this issue of *Sunshine Sharing*, we'll update your knowledge about how to keep your heart and cardiovascular system healthy. Specifically, we'll cover seven things you can do to prevent or overcome common heart problems.

### Evaluating Your Risk of Heart Disease

Although a heart attack or stroke happens suddenly, there are important signs you should pay attention to that indicate the development of cardiovascular disease. If you have any of these indications, start adopting the changes suggested in this newsletter immediately.

**Gum Disease.** There is a high correlation between inflammation of the gums and inflammation of the arteries. If your gums are inflamed, you're at high risk for heart disease.

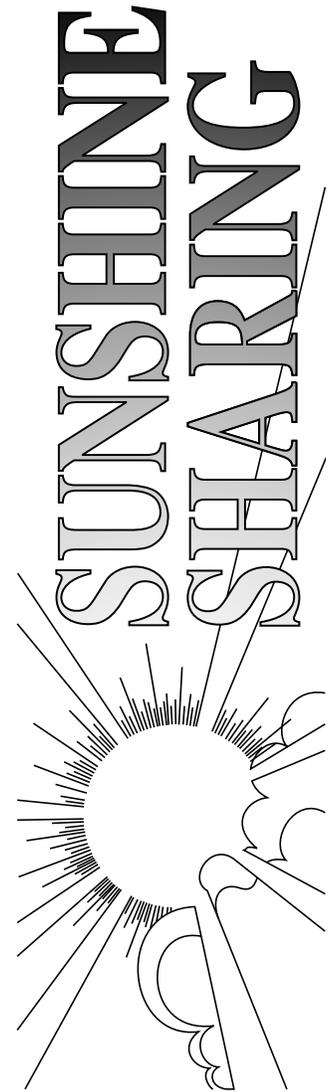
**Varicose Veins and Hemorrhoids.** These problems are reflections of sluggish circulation and poor blood vessel tone, which are also indications cardiovascular disease is developing.

**Fatigue and Shortness of Breath.** Feeling no desire for physical activity, getting winded with minor exertion, and feelings of pressure or pain in your chest are early warning signs that your heart may be struggling and need some help.

**Facial Clues.** A red, bulbous tip on the nose, spider veins in the nose, and a vertical crease in the left earlobe are all early warning signs that your heart may need help. A bright-red tip and pointed tongue is also an indicator of heart stress and possible cardiac inflammation.

**Blood Tests.** Blood tests for fasting blood glucose, hemoglobin A1C, homocysteine, C-reactive protein, and fibrinogen can provide valuable insight into the health of your heart and cardiovascular system. If you're concerned about your heart and circulation consider talking to your doctor about taking them.

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Your guide to better health the natural way.

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### Important Notice

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Managing Editor/Writer: Steven Horne  
Editor: David Horne  
Associate Editors: Carolyn Hughes,  
Katie Horne

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High levels of hemoglobin A1C and fasting blood glucose are signs you have metabolic syndrome or diabetes. This means your system is more inflamed, putting you at higher risk for heart disease. It will also make it harder to manage your weight.

High levels of homocysteine and C-reactive protein are markers for high levels of inflammation, which again increases your risk for the development of arterial plaque. High levels of fibrinogen indicate a risk for the formation of blood clots.



## Seven Keys to Preventing Heart Disease

If you show signs of needing help with your heart and circulation, take action now. Don't wait until you have a heart attack or stroke, now is the time to take preventative action. Here are seven specific actions you can take to keep your heart healthy.

### Key One

#### Increase Your Intake of Antioxidants

Oxidative stress (also known as free radical damage) is what allows cholesterol and minerals to stick to the arteries, forming arterial plaque. The plaque is actually formed as a protective mechanism to strengthen artery walls damaged by inflammation. However, if it's allowed to continue to form, it reduces blood flow to the heart, brain, and other tissues which increases the risk of heart attack, stroke, and arterial blockages.

The antioxidant nutrients present in brightly-colored, fresh fruits and vegetables help prevent this process. Eating several cups of fruits and vegetables each day is the best place to start. Berries are particularly helpful. If you have varicose veins, spider veins or other signs of cardiovascular problems, try eating one cup of berries (e.g. blueberries, blackberries, raspberries) every day. This will reduce cardiovascular inflammation, protect cholesterol from oxidizing, improve venous tone, and help heal varicose veins, spider veins, and inflamed gums.

When it comes to protecting your heart from free radical damage, one of the best antioxidants is Co-Q10. This supplement reduces blood pressure, aids recovery from heart attacks, keeps cholesterol from oxidizing, and improves energy production in the heart muscle. Statin drugs deplete Co-Q10, so it should always be taken by people using statin drugs to lower cholesterol.

You can also take an **Antioxidant Formula** to help reduce oxidative stress. It should include herbs and nutrients like mangosteen, turmeric, alpha lipoic acid, açai berry, and lycium. Hawthorn and bilberry are also helpful.



### Key Two

#### Get an Oil Change

While excess consumption of anything isn't healthy, low fat diets are not the way to prevent heart disease. It's less about the amount of fat you eat and more about the kind of fat you eat.



The fats that are damaging to the cardiovascular system are the processed vegetable oils and the fats from animals raised in artificial conditions. The fats you should avoid include all hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated vegetable oils, margarine, shortening, deep-fried foods, animal fat from commercially-raised animals, and the fats in processed foods.

Animal fats from healthy animals, raised organically and preferably on a pasture do not cause problems with heart disease, nor do the fats found in naturally fatty foods like nuts, seeds, and avocados. Furthermore, the medium-chain saturated fats found in virgin coconut oil and organic butter actually protect your heart.

Don't be afraid of including a moderate amount of good fats in your diet, which include extra virgin olive oil, coconut oil, organic butter and cream, organic whole-milk dairy products, and fatty meats from organic, grass-fed animals. It also helps to take extra fat soluble vitamins, especially D<sub>3</sub>, E, and K<sub>2</sub> as these nutrients reduce your risk of cardiovascular diseases.

### Key Three

#### Regulate Your Blood Sugar

Eating refined carbohydrates is far worse for your heart than eating fats. This is because sugar, white flour, and other empty-calorie carbohydrates spike insulin levels and increase arterial inflammation. This is also why it's wise to avoid low fat or fat free foods, as they often contain large amounts of refined carbohydrates.



If your fasting glucose or hemoglobin A1C is high, you can improve your overall health by religiously avoiding all refined carbohydrates, including refined sugar, high fructose corn syrup, white flour, and white rice. You may also need to temporarily avoid natural foods that are high in carbohydrates such as grains, potatoes and sugary fruits (the berries mentioned above being an exception).

It will also be helpful to take some herbs and supplements to help control your blood sugar. Try taking herbs like cinnamon, goldenseal, nopal, fenugreek, gymnema, and banaba as part of a **Blood Sugar Control Formula**. Cinnamon is particularly helpful because it's also a circulatory stimulant. Nutrients like chromium, vanadium, and berberine may also be helpful.

## Key Four

### Improve Your Blood Flow



High blood pressure puts stress on arteries, encouraging the formation of arterial plaque. In turn, arterial plaque narrows arteries, forcing an increase in blood pressure. This creates a vicious cycle that results in deteriorating cardiovascular health.

A relatively new discovery is that arteries are dilated by a tiny molecule called nitric oxide (NO), which is released by the one-cell thick lining of the arteries, known as the endothelium. Increasing nitric oxide helps dilate the arteries improving blood flow and reduces cardiovascular inflammation at the same time, which reduces plaque formation. Conversely, inflammation reduces NO output.

There are two pathways for creating NO in the cardiovascular system. One involves the amino acid l-arginine and the other the nitrates found in vegetables like beets. Taking a **Nitric Oxide Enhancing Formula** containing at least 5,000 mg. of l-arginine, beet root extract, and nutrients that reduce arterial inflammation like vitamins C and D<sub>3</sub> can help reduce cardiovascular inflammation and dilate arteries to reduce blood pressure at the same time.

Magnesium is also important because it helps muscles relax, reducing blood pressure and stress on the heart. It's a great alternative to the calcium channel blockers often prescribed for high blood pressure. Magnesium is also important for energy production in the heart muscle.

Pungent herbs also stimulate blood flow and people who consume them regularly have a reduced risk for high blood pressure and heart disease. These include capsicum, garlic, cinnamon, and ginger, which can be consumed as spices and taken as supplements.



## Key Five

### Get Physically Active

Regular exercise increases blood flow to the heart and strengthens the heart so that it pumps more blood with less effort. It also helps control weight and reduces fat—a big gain if you consider that one

pound of fatty tissue contains one mile of capillaries that the heart has to pump blood through. It also increases NO production. Exercise can also reduce your chances of developing other conditions that may put strain on your heart, such as high blood pressure and diabetes.

If you don't feel like you have the energy for exercise, it's very important to work on increasing your heart energy. Try taking Co-Q10, magnesium, and the **Nitric Oxide Enhancing Formula** to increase energy production in the heart and make exercising easier.

## Key Six

### Manage Anger and Stress

The heart is strongly associated with emotions and your emotional state plays a large role in heart health. Research suggests that people with aggressive, angry personalities and workaholics are more prone to heart disease. People who are more easy going and laid-back have a lower risk of heart disease.



This may be partly due to the fact that love and pleasure have a vasodilative effect, which helps reduce blood pressure and improve blood flow. The bottom line is that people who have close ties to family and friends are less likely to have a heart attack and even if they do, they have a greater chance of recovery.

Anger creates friction in relationships and pushes people away, which may be why angry people are more prone to heart disease. And, in a strictly emotional sense, excessive anger hardens the heart and may have a direct damaging effect. That's why it is important to learn how to manage anger.

If you have problems with anger, try taking an **Anger-Reducing Flower Essence Blend** to help soften your heart. The blend contains flower essences like calendula, snapdragon, impatiens, and vine.

Excessive stress raises blood pressure and heart rate, which are risk factors for heart disease. So, it's also helpful to learn how to manage stress.

You can counteract the effects of stress by deliberately taking time to relax and enjoy life. As suggested before, pleasurable experiences counteract the negative effects of stress, including dilating the arteries helping to lower blood pressure and improve circulation.

If you have a lot of stressful events in your life, do something to pamper yourself. Take a vacation, get a massage, take a walk in nature, talk with an empathetic friend, make love with your partner, or soak in an Epsom salt bath.

Adaptogens like ashwagandha, ginseng, astragalus, and holy basil can help to reduce stress and improve cardiovascular function. Consider taking an **Adaptogen Formula** or an **Anti-Stress B-Complex Formula** to help reduce your stress level.

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## Additional Help and Information

For more information about keeping your heart healthy and preventing heart disease contact the person who gave you this newsletter. You can also consult the following resources:

*Strategies for Healing* by Steven Horne

*The High Blood Pressure Hoax* by Sherry A. Rogers, M.D.

*The Doctor's Heart Cure* by Al Sears, M.D.

*Reverse Heart Disease Now* by Stephen T. Sinatra, M.D. and James C. Roberts, M.D. with Martin Zucker

This issue of Sunshine Sharing is provided by:

# Essentials for Wellness Now

## Shelly McCauley, CNHP

[essentialsforwellnessnow.com](http://essentialsforwellnessnow.com)

**Hours:** Mon, Wed, Fri & Sat from 8:30 to 5:30

**Phone:** 720-318-5950

**Email:** [essentiallyyou@q.com](mailto:essentiallyyou@q.com)

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*Key Seven*

#### Take Supplements to Support Heart Health

In addition to diet and lifestyle changes, there are supplements which can help to strengthen your heart, improve your circulation, and reduce your risk of heart disease. Here is a summary of the most important supplements for heart health, including some previously mentioned.



*Co-Q10 to reduce oxidative stress and enhance heart energy.* As mentioned earlier, Co-Q10 is a very valuable supplement for reducing cardiovascular inflammation (and gum disease) as well as lowering blood pressure. It is important for energy production in the cell and has been found to strengthen the heart in people who have suffered heart disease and to protect it from further damage.

*Hawthorn to strengthen the heart.* Hawthorn is a food-like herb that can be taken regularly to help strengthen the heart and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. It helps improve blood flow in the extremities, helps reduce blood pressure, and acts as a tonic to the heart muscle.

Hawthorn is combined with ginkgo in the **Brain-Heart Formula**, which is a good supplement to help counteract some of the effects of aging on the brain and the heart. It's a safe formula that elderly people can take every day.

*Omega-3 essential fatty acids to reduce inflammation.* Most Americans consume too many omega-6 fatty acids from vegetable oils and too few omega-3 fatty acids, which are found in ocean fish, grass-fed meat, and dairy and many nuts. This imbalance increases inflammation in the body. Taking an omega-3 essential

fatty acid supplement reduces inflammation by improving the balance of these fats. These also have a beneficial effect on the brain to prevent dementia during aging.

*L-carnitine for heart energy.* This important amino acid, found primarily in red meat, transports fatty acids to be metabolized for energy in the mitochondria. It improves energy production and oxygen utilization in the heart and can be very helpful for improving heart health.

*Magnesium to prevent spasms.* About three-quarters of the population is deficient in magnesium, a critical mineral for heart health. Magnesium helps the heart and blood vessels to relax properly, lowering blood pressure. It also improves energy production in the heart and reduces risk of heart attacks.

*Capsicum to stimulate blood flow.* Capsicum, also known as cayenne pepper or red pepper, helps normalize circulation throughout the body, equalizing blood flow to all parts. It also helps balance blood pressure.

*Garlic to reduce plaque formation and lower blood pressure.* Garlic has numerous positive effects on circulation. It helps to stimulate blood flow and often helps reduce high blood pressure, especially when taken with capsicum. It also helps prevent cholesterol from oxidizing, while lowering levels of cholesterol in general, which helps prevent the formation of arterial plaque.

*Vitamin E for prevention of blood clots.* Studies have found that people who consume more foods containing vitamin E have less risk for heart disease. Vitamin E helps protect against cardiovascular inflammation and the formation of blood clots that cause heart attacks, strokes, and thrombosis. You can also take butcher's broom or nattozimes to help prevent blood clots.

*Vitamin D<sub>3</sub> to reduce the risk of heart disease.* Heart attacks are more frequent in the winter months, which is when many people become severely deficient in vitamin D<sub>3</sub>. Taking vitamin D<sub>3</sub> helps reduce the inflammation involved in plaque formation and helps reduce the overall risk for cardiovascular disease.