

More support for antioxidants in heart disease prevention

Richard Lewis

Two articles in recent issues of The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) gave a big boost to the use of antioxidant nutrients for controlling and preventing coronary heart disease (CHD).

The antioxidant theory holds that antioxidant nutrients protect the lowdensity lipoproteins (LDL) from oxidation.

The antioxidant nutrients are vitamins A, C, E, and beta carotene and the trace mineral selenium, along with magnesium and zinc.

This support from the medical establishment hasn't always been so enthusiastic. Back in the 1950's, Evan and Wilfrid Shute, both medical doctors, were successfully treating heart patients with vitamin E in Canada. They were labeled frauds by the medical establishment and the hospital returned their mail unopened rather than deliver it.

In the 1960's, Wilfrid Shute, M.D., said about his book, Vitamin E for Ailing and Healthy Hearts, "I hope this book will be the means of making available to all sufferers from heart disease the help they deserve—a proved, successful treatment." The information about vitamin E wasn't accepted by the mainstream physicians.

But times are changing and nutrition is finding its way into the standard medical journals and even into the clinical offices of standard physicians.

In one such article appearing in the July 12 issue of JAMA, the researchers concluded by writing, "It appears that reductions in serum total cholesterol levels are not likely to bring cultures with a high CHD risk, such as the United States and Northern Europe, back to a CHD

continued on page 2

Little Things Add Up

Harry Truman, when he was President, was fond of taking a brisk walk. Asked by a secret service agent how the President would define brisk, he answered, "Walk as though you have someplace to go."

Medical ignorance

The greatest single achievement of science in this most scientifically productive of centuries is the discovery that we are profoundly ignorant; we know very little about nature and understand even less... Iwish there were some formal course in medical school on Medical Ignorance; textbooks as well, although they would have to be very heavy volumes.

Lewis Thomas, President Emeritus, Sloan-Kettering, physician, philosopher, author

Ann Kerwin, Ph.D. and Marlys Witte, M.D. are doing just what Dr. Thomas wanted—teaching a course in medical ignorance at the University of Arizona College of Medicine.

As an introduction to the course, Dr. Kerwin constructs a map of ignorance for her students. First, there is the Republic of Known Unknowns. It houses the things we know we don't know. Next to it is The Shrouded Province of Unknown Unknowns. It is home of those things we don't know that we don't know. Most dangerous is the land of the Emirate of False "Truths." These are the things we think we know but don't.

> We learn of the inhabitants of continued on page 5

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The information in this publication is meant to complement the advice and guidance of your physician, not replace it.

Nutritional Medicine

by Ron Hunninghake, M.D.

The team

Did you realize that in addition to all your other responsibilities as a modern human being you also wear the hat of "coach"?

Let's imagine the individual essential nutrients you must consume each and every day for health maintenance to be your "team"!

Every time you decide to eat something, you are holding "practice." You assemble your team to work on the "fundamentals" of good nutrition.

Then, along comes the day of "the big game." Life throws you that huge challenge called STRESS! Your individual players have to "dig deep" into themselves. Do you have adequate "reserves"? Can your team perform up to its optimal potential?

Continued from page 1

mortality level characteristic for the Mediterranean and Japanese cultures unless other factors are also changed. The Mediterranean and Japanese diets, low in saturated fat and *rich in antioxidants*, may have beneficial effects both on the oxidizability of LDL particles and on [the growth of blood clots that cause heart attacks], apart from an effect on LDL levels per se. This stresses the importance of factors other than serum cholesterol, blood pressure, and smoking status; *such as diet*, in CHD prevention." (Emphasis added)

This alone is a major step forward. The real leap came the month before in a *JAMA* article looking at the effects of vitamins C and E on the progression of coronary artery disease (CAD).

This study, completed at the University of Southern California

Then the team blows it! You find yourself right smack in the middle of a losing season. No energy, despair, injuries...the team appears washed up.

So you call a team meeting. You must "measure up" to your strengths AND weaknesses. You maintain your strengths with good, "wholesome" practices. You supplement your weak areas. A few star players are not going to save the season. You need all your guys at full speed!

With time, patience, applied knowledge, a strong spirit, and an evervigilanteye to the fundamentals ...you CAN coach your team out of the cellar of ill health. You take one game at a time to build a winning season.

and led by Howard Hodis, M.D., used angiograms, two years apart, to verify their results in 156 men who had coronary bypass surgery. With these men, the research team wanted to learn what effect supplementary and dietary vitamin C and E, in conjunction with a cholesterol lowering diet and either colestipolniacin (a cholesterol lowering drug) or a placebo, would have on CAD.

The "men who had a supplementary vitamin E intake of 100 IU per day or more demonstrated significantly less coronary artery lesion progression than did men with a supplementary vitamin E intake of less than 100 IU," wrote Hodis and his associates.

Earlier epidemiological studies showed much the same results with vitamin E. Eric Rimm, ScD, and *continued on page 3*

Page 2 • September 1995 / Health Hunter

Continued from page 2

associates at the Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital showed a relationship between a higher intake of supplementary vitamin E and a reduction in the risk of heart disease in men. Meir Stampfer, M.D., found similar results in women. Both studies were published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* in 1993.

"The consistency between vitamin E intake and reduced coronary lesion progression in [this study] and reduced incidence of CHD with higher vitamin E intake reported in epidemiological studies is additionally strengthened by the finding that atherosclerosis progression in [this study's] cohort is predictive of subsequent CHD events," Hodis' team added.

The antioxidant theory holds that antioxidant nutrients protect the low-density lipoproteins (LDL) from oxidation. When LDL becomes oxidized, it forms a foam cell that promotes the beginning and progression of artery clogging lesions. By preventing the oxidation, antioxidants prevent the start and the progression of coronary artery disease (CAD). "Several lines of evidence support this proposition," Hodis adds.

The researchers said that their "data indicate a connection between increased antioxidant vitamin E intake and angiographically demonstrated reduction in progression of CAD." They add that, "these data indicate a promising role for antioxidant vitamins in primary prevention [of CAD]."

Vitamin E and its fellow antioxidants have finally found clinical support for their role in preventing coronary artery disease and treating it after it has started.

HEALTH HUNTERS AT HOME

Steps to healing

- 1. Get your history straight
- 2. Sort through your beliefs
- 3. Respect and release your emotions
- 4. Learn to listen to your body
- 5. Learn to respect your body
- 6. Acknowledge a Higher Power or Inner Wisdom
- 7. Reclaim the fullness of your mind
- 8. Get help
- 9. Work with your body
- 10. Gather information
- 11. Forgive
- 12. Actively participate in your health

Christiane Northrup, M.D. offers these twelve steps in her book, *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom*, published in 1994 by Bantam Books.

Dr. Northrup's wonderful book addresses problems that are uniquely female in a clear, easily understood style.

But her rules ring true for me, a white male, and could apply to other males for their healing process.

According to Dr. Northrup, "the first step is to admit that healing is necessary, and the second is opening yourself to the information that you begin to attract following the commitment."

She points out that Goethe said it best:

Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative [and creation], there is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence provides, too.... Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin it now. I can remember more than fifteen years ago when I had my angina pain while running. I walked home convincing myself it was something I ate. It happened worse the next night so I thought I would just not run for a while until it went away.

I violated all twelve of Dr. Northrup's rules. I was a standard male who could tough it through just like I had been trained. That is, I know now, the heart of male-myth denial.

I didn't tell my wife, my doctor, or anyone else till a couple of weeks afterwards. I finally told my wife. When she was through with me (my male ego took quite a beating), I called my doctor. She sent me to a cardiologist who found one of the arteries in my heart completely blocked and another 50% blocked. He started on a conservative program of watchful waiting and active medical control.

Then about 10 1/2 years ago I came to work at The Center and started putting some of Dr. North-rup's wisdom to work more intelligently. Having those rules before me when I started would have speeded my journey considerably.

Dr. Northrup will be coming to Wichita as a member of the faculty for The Center's 14th International Conference on Human Functioning, September 8, 9, and 10. If you can't catch her lecture and workshop, come to the Friday evening public lecture, September 8 at 8:00 p.m. at Century II Convention Center. She will update you on *Women's Bodies*, *Women's Wisdom*.

Her book will be available at the conference.

Richard Lewis

INFORMATION WORTH KNOWING

Acupuncture is often the treatment of last resort. *Beyond Yin and Yang* by George A. Ulett, M.D., Ph.D provides us with a clearer understanding of what happens during acupuncture. Learn about the traditional meaning of acupuncture followed by an exposition of current knowledge. The questions this month are taken from his book.

- 1. Acupuncture's principle use is in the treatment of _____.
 - a. impaired circulation
 - b. flu
 - c. pain
 - d. all the above
- 2. Treatment with acupuncture is essentially based on the action of the _____.
 - a. nervous system
 - b. inner ear
 - c. digestive tract
 - d. cardiovascular system
- Useful acupuncture points are areas that are heavily innervated by motor and sensory nerve terminals or points adjacent to major nerve tracts.
 - a. True b. False
- 4. Although acupuncture had existed in China for over 4,000 years, it did not gain acceptance in the United States until after 1971. Americans reasoned that acupuncture worked by _____.
 - a. hypnosis
 - b. placebo

- c. Oriental metaphysics
- d. Yin/Yang
- 5. The term "acupuncture" has been used to describe many different kinds of treatment other than the traditional one of inserting needles and manually twisting them.
 a. True
 b. False
- 6. There are _______
 acupuncture points on the ear.
 a. 10
 b. 55
 c. 168
 d. 1,000
- From the research, it is shown
 that by changing the frequency of stimulation, without altering the needle insertion or electrode placement, different brain _____ can be activated.
 - a. waves
 - b. neuropeptides
 - c. circulation
 - d. none of the above
 - FOR ANSWERS, SEE PAGE 7 •



Case of the month

A 70-year-old male came to The Center with severe, unrelenting depression in spite of counseling and anti-depressant medication. Also, he had memory loss, severe constipation, and bouts of anxiety. This had been going on for over a year in spite of a two-month hospitalization at a nearby mental health institution.

The patient and his wife were long-term vitamin-takers, but they had never had their levels checked.

His laboratory results showed some significant findings. These included a very low DHEA, or master adrenal hormone; an abnormal fatty acid profile; very low red blood cell chromium levels; and scurvy-level plasma vitamin C. The patient also had a body temperature almost two degrees below normal.

The patient began drinking walnut tea for his depression, special amino acids to improve brain functioning, B injections to raise his B levels, evening primrose oil to correct the fatty acid imbalance, and increasing potassium intake, DHEA, and chromium to take care of deficiencies. He later started on the special slow-release T-3 program to rehabilitate his metabolism up to a body temperature of 98.6°.

For the first few months he felt that not much was happening. Then, approximately four months into the program, he began to see improvement. He started sleeping better and having more energy. It was almost six months into the program that the depression completely left him.

As of his last visit just recently, the depression had left and he had been declared completely cured by his psychiatrist who told him there is no need to take anti-depression medication or return for further follow-up.

Page 4 • September 1995 / Health Hunter

Continued from page 1

the Shrouded Province of Unknown Unknowns by hindsight. For instance, "not long ago we didn't know about DNA. We didn't know about T-cells (an important part of the immune system), neuropeptides, and AIDS. They were not on the 'map' of medical 'reality.' Often in the process of investigating known unknowns, unknown unknowns emerge," Kerwin tells her students.

The hard part is identifying the things we know but don't. Again, retrospect plays an important role. As Kerwin points out, "respected authorities have held that the function of the brain is to cool blood, hysteria derives from womb malfunction, and most damaging, perhaps, that they understood perfectly and completely aspects of physiology or treatment which they had, in fact, barely apprehended or misunderstood. We don't know who and how many populate this land. But, if past experience is a guide, it is a crowded domain. Current medical knowledge may belong there."

There are many current ideas that The Center would identify as inhabitants of the Emirate and several others that we hold true that others are as sure that they live there as well. Again, only retrospect will let us know who is right.

There are blurs on the map, Kerwin points out. These are moving vans as continuing investigation moves hypotheses from the land of the unknown unknown to the land of the known unknown. At the same time, there are known facts and treatment protocols moving into and out of the Emirate of False Truths. It is a constantly changing landscape.

A cartoon by Johnny Hart continued on page 6

Mental Medicine

by Jon Sward, Ph.D.

Can mental processes affect the immune system? Certain ones can, believes Dr. Larry LeShan. Dr. LeShan was involved in treating cancer patients using psychotherapy for over forty years. The first twenty years, he followed the traditional psychotherapy approach of looking for hidden psychological problems and trying to correct them. During that time all his patients died from their cancer, although most made better adjustments to their illness.

Then Dr. LeShan changed his approach. He started focusing on people's strengths and their unique way of expressing themselves in the world. He began asking probing questions to uncover what kind of a life for each person was really worth fighting for. When using this approach, 50% of his patients went into indefinite remission.

Dr. LeShan published articles in the professional literatures detailing his work, but the professionals didn't pay much attention to it. So he began writing books for the lay public to get the message across where it is needed. His book, Cancer as a Turning Point, gives lots of fascinating case histories and interesting self-help information. This book is available in paperback at The Center's Gift of Health or through most bookstores. The last section is a special workbook with 29 exercises to guide the reader into discovering the kind of life that can trigger the "zest" response. The same exercises are good for anyone wanting more zest and fulfillment out of life. Watch the fall class schedule for more on this. ΗH

CENTER UPDATE

Do vegetarians need iron supplements?

Even though much has been done to fortify foods with iron (such as iron fortified breads, pasta, cereals and infant formula), iron deficiency still plagues many in the United States.

Iron deficiency often occurs when there is relatively poor iron absorption from food, during growth spurts in children, or when there is substantial blood loss, such as heavy menstrual losses.

This deficiency may show up as a decreased capacity for work because of fatigue, poor athletic performance, or an impaired immune system.

Some vegetarians tend to be low in iron, researchers believe. Yet several other studies show that vegetarians have iron stores as good as meat eaters.

This seems to boil down to what type of vegetarian one is. The research showing vegetarians' iron stores to be as good as anyone else's were done on people who ate a more balanced vegetarian diet such as lacto-ovo vegetarians or those on a vegan diet.

The much more restrictive diets, such as macrobiotic diets, are associated with a more widespread iron deficiency.

Vegetarians have to work harder to be sure that their diets are properly balanced and they are getting the necessary proteins and nutrients they need. But, in many ways, they find many rewards in this work.

Beat The Odds Update

Vitamins and colon cancer

Vitamins significantly reduce the growth of precancerous growths, according to a report that appeared in the journal, *Diseases of the Colon and Rectum*.

In this clinical trial, the researchers divided 290 people into three groups. Group 1 was given vitamin A (30,000 IU/day), vitamin C (1 gram/day) and vitamin E (70 mg/day). Group 2 received lactulose, which raises intestinal acid levels and reduces the formation of cancer causing bile acids. Group 3 received no treatment.

After an average follow-up period of 18 months, the recurrence rates of adenomas (precancerous polyps) were 5.7% for group 1, the vitamin group; 14.7% for group 2 and 35.9% for group 3.

Another highly publicized study that appeared in *The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)* showed little results in suppressing adenomas in the colon with a similar regimen of vitamins. The main difference was that the *NEJM* study used beta-carotene while the successful study mentioned above used vitamin A.

Alan Gaby, M.D., commenting on the studies in the *Townsend Letter for Doctors* said, "What I have been able to conclude so far from studying the literature is that vitamins do work, but we still have a lot to learn about optimal combinations and doses."

This is why we talk about biochemical individuality at The Center. Since everyone is different in many ways, including biochemically, we believe it is important to look at each person's biochemistry and then adjust the doses of nutrients to fit the person.

Not considering biochemical individuality may be the cause of the differences in the two studies. The amounts of nutrients given in the successful research project virtually stopped the adenomas. The doses either fit or exceeded the individual's requirements while they may not have in the *NEJM* study.

This is why we check each person's nutrient levels in *Beat The Odds*—to help each person get as close to optimal as possible.

Continued from page 5

describes the process well. Two ants are looking out of their ant hill and one says, "I wish I knew all the answers." The other ant answers, "Big deal! You should try coming up with all the questions."

Kerwin says this another way by asking the question and answering it, "What does a philosopher do in surgery? She works collaboratively to train students to question, to turn answers into questions, to become aware of their human and individual limitations, and to learn how they learn, inquire, and cope with an immense—at once menacing and promising—domain of ignorance."

This is something all of us should try to grasp, along with the medical students.

(Editor's note: Both Dr. Kerwin and Dr. Witte will join the faculty of The 14th International Conference on Human Functioning being held September 8, 9, and 10, to more completely unfold their view of medical ignorance.)

Industry in conflict

Smoke-free 2000 was the goal set by C. Everett Koop when he was surgeon general. He wanted to see a smoke free society in the United States by the year 2000.

Within the medical community the hospitals may be the leading institutional force in this area. In Wichita, the hospitals have made giant strides in eliminating smoking in and around their buildings.

The Journal of the American MedicalAssociation has taken strong editorial position on the importance of a smoke free society.

In spite of all of this good work, there is a Trojan horse in medicine the insurance industry.

"Prudential Insurance Company is the largest supplier of health insurance and the largest owner of forprofit health maintenance organizations (HMOs) in the U.S.A.," points out Lancet, a leading British medical journal, in a recent editorial. "It also owns a big share of five of the six largest tobacco companies. According to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, at the beginning of 1995 Prudential owned over \$12 million of RJR Nabisco stock; just over \$100 million of Philip Morris; almost \$97 million in Loews (makers of Lorillard, Heritage, Kent and Newport); over \$36 million of American Brands; and \$44,000 of stocks in Brooke Group (which owns Liggett)."

Prudential isn't alone. The other major health insurers follow suit. They also have large holdings in tobacco industry stocks.

Lancet closes by pointing out, "Prudential's ubiquitous advertisements feature Gibraltar, urging us to 'Get a piece of the rock.' A granite headstone, perhaps?" Answers from page 4

1. c. The World Health Organization says that acupuncture is used by over one third of the world's population.

2. a. Although early Chinese physicians are not thought to have known about the nervous structures, they were the first to describe the action of the central nervous system.

3. a. The acupuncture meridians are actually a primitive analogy of nerve pathways.

4. a & b. The American Medical Association first cautioned against quackery and later called acupuncture an "experimental procedure."

5. a. It also applies to placing small needles, magnets, staples, or taped metal pellets in points on the ear.

6. c. Called auriculotherapy, it also can be useful in the treatment of pain.

7. b. Acupuncture is not point specific, but rather it is frequency specific.

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- Know Your Nutrients: Selenium 9/19 9/21 What's New About Getting Older DHEA: What Doesn't It Do? 9/28 Know Your Nutrients: Vitamin A 10/3 What Do Our Fingernails, Tongues, and Ears Tell Us About 10/5 Our Health? Healthy Eating Tips for Vegetarians and Meat Eaters 10/12 Can Bowel Cleansing Lead to Better Health? 10/19 10/20 Beat The Odds Update Know Your Nutrients: Folic Acid 10/24 10/26 How Visualization Can Help Battle Cancer Wonderful World Within You & How to Help Your Children 11/2 and Grandchildren Do Better in School 11/9 How to Boost Your Energy Know Your Nutrients: L-Lysine 11/14
- 11/16 How Prayer Can Help You Heal

9/8-10 14th International Conference on Human Functioning

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Call (316) 682-3100 for more information on programs listed above.

Ulcer causing bacteria found in water

Now that scientists and physicians acknowledge the fact that the bacterium *Helicobacter pylori* causes most stomach ulcers, they are focusing on why over 30% of Americans have it.

It may live in contaminated water, say researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Sampling water from Narino, Columbia, where the people have the world's highest percentage of ulcers and gastric cancer and where 90% of them are infected with H. pylori, they found pieces of DNA belonging to the bacterium.

Testing U.S. water samples, they believe, will lead to ways to prevent ulcers.

Science News

