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The Vitamin Shelf

NEWSLETTER

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Summer Edition 2014

Your Cholesterol Is Going Up!

Chances Are You'll Live Longer

I suppose I should begin with an admission: I was wrong! I greatly misjudged the Pharmaceutical/Medical industry. I foolishly believed that they were capable of being positively influenced by their patients whom, rumor has it, they are supposed to serve. I must confess that even I am shocked by the craven, heartless action that is being undertaken by the institutions to whom we are supposed to entrust our health and well-being.

Let me start at the beginning. You might assume that the wide acceptance of the "Cholesterol Theory of Heart Disease" is based on decades of accumulated research which has taken this theory and transformed it into one of the most significant medical breakthroughs of our time. The truth is exactly the opposite! The theory was not widely accepted in the beginning and, despite highly-profitable cholesterol drug sales, decades of research has conclusively proven that "high-cholesterol" has little to do with heart disease. The reality that millions of prescriptions for statin (cholesterol) drugs have not put a dent in our country's heart attack rates might have been our first clue.

In the 1950's, bombastic researcher Ancel Keys postulated that saturated fat and cholesterol were the cause of heart disease. His theory was roundly rejected by the scientific community at the time. He then conducted population studies and presented his findings to Congress and the AMA. Despite strong scientific objections, the McGovern committee mandated that the Dept. of Agriculture adopt new dietary guidelines. The manufacturers of the foods who benefited from this folly eagerly went along promoting the myth. People began being tested for cholesterol. Then drugs were found to lower cholesterol. "The Cholesterol Theory of Heart Disease" had not been proven correct, but it *had* been proven to be extremely profitable.

Ancel Keys had shown Congress population studies from seven different countries revealing a clear association between high saturated fat, high cholesterol, and higher rates of heart disease. Hindsight reveals that Keys "research" contained many flaws. The most damning was that he did not present the other twelve countries he studied which revealed that many populations that had higher saturated fat and cholesterol had much LOWER rates of heart disease. You can read a more detailed account of this story in The Wall Street Journal (May 4-5, 2014. "Fat Reconsidered" by Nina Teicholz) or the book "The Great Cholesterol Myth", by Dr. Steven Sinatra and Johnny Bowden. (*continued on page 2*).

Unfortunately, the damage has been done and it seems to be an uphill battle getting people to stop making themselves unhealthy as they adopt low-fat, low-cholesterol diets and take dangerous, liver-toxic drugs. Please consider just a few of the overwhelming facts that refute "The Cholesterol Theory of Disease":

**The same amount of people die from heart attacks who have cholesterol under 200 as those with cholesterol over 300!*

**In a study of over 183,000 people admitted to the hospital with a heart attack, 50% had normal (under 100) LDL ("bad" cholesterol).*

**In a large study, the following risk factors were not reliable in predicting heart attacks: total cholesterol, HDL, LDL, C-reactive protein, body fat, triglycerides. The only risk factor that was spot on was the arterial calcium score!*

Plaque is mostly calcium and fibrin and is only 2%- 20% cholesterol. Remember, it is called **CALCIFICATION of the arteries, not **CHOLESTERIFICATION** of the arteries.*

** In a recent dietary study, people who exercised and ate a Mediterranean Diet had over a 70% reduction in heart disease over the control group: but the cholesterol levels in both groups remained the same!*

**Cholesterol drugs do not reverse plaque! Crestor™ has been shown to slightly slow the rate of growth. You may be interested in this quote from a Crestor© advertisement:*

"Crestor© is prescribed along with diet for lowering high cholesterol and has not been determined to prevent heart disease, heart attacks, or strokes."

**Lipitor© boasts a 36% reduction in heart attack risk. When you read this, you think "one out of three", right? The shocking truth is stated at the bottom of the advertisement. In the placebo group, there was 3% heart attacks. In the Lipitor© group, there was 2% heart attacks. The drop from 3% to 2% can technically be stated as a drop of 33%, but the simple fact is that this drug only helped 1% of those participants. Remember, the drug lowered the cholesterol in almost everyone, but it only prevented a heart attack in 1%.*

**The Framingham Study is one of the largest studies looking at cardiovascular disease. It showed that lowering cholesterol shortened lifespan. This was recently confirmed by a global population study that showed that higher cholesterol was associated with longer lifespan.*

People have a difficult time accepting the obvious because they are being told just the opposite by their doctors. If the above facts are correct, then why do almost 100% of doctors insist on lowering cholesterol (usually with drugs)? This "lock-step" attitude is not based on overwhelming, definitive science as we are led to believe. A group of 12 medical experts determine the "Standard of Practice" which physicians are obligated to follow in order to keep their licenses. Nine of the twelve experts are compensated to the tune of \$100,000- \$200,000 annually by cholesterol drug companies. Draw your own conclusions.

It is true that a growing number of us are wising up. We are rejecting drugs and insisting on achieving true cardiovascular health through diet, lifestyle, and nutrition. Cholesterol phobia continues to affect many individuals who, while sensibly wary of drugs, seek natural means to lower cholesterol in the mistaken belief that this will improve cardiovascular health. One of the most popular and reliable supplements is Red Yeast Rice. A bit of history is again in order.

Over a decade ago, a supplement company turned the world upside-down with the announcement that they were offering a natural supplement that reliably lowered cholesterol. At the time, this was tantamount to announcing that you had a natural supplement that cured heart disease. Red Yeast Rice is a fermented food that naturally contains an array of statin compounds. Unlike the single-statin, concentrated drugs, Red Yeast Rice is able to inhibit the liver from producing cholesterol without the significant negative effects produced by the drugs. (Again, I will remind you that using Red Yeast Rice to lower cholesterol confers no health benefit).

In fact, Red Yeast Rice is the food where the statin compounds were discovered and then patented as drugs. This new supplement got the attention of the drug companies and they were not going to stand by and lose market share. (Continued next page).

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Big Pharma sued Mother Nature. The drug companies argued that the supplement infringed on their patents. The supplement company argued that Red Yeast Rice was a natural food extract that, by definition, cannot be patented. The rulings went back and forth as the case moved up the ladder of judicial jurisdiction. In a great example of “money talks and fairness walks”, the courts decided in favor of Big Pharma... sort of.

The actual ruling was stated in a vague fashion. Some supplement companies immediately discontinued selling Red Yeast Rice while other companies interpreted the ruling to say that you could still sell it, as long as you did not state a statin content on your label and avoided mentioning anything about cholesterol. As the years went by it appeared that the latter interpretation was correct as FDA made no moves to restrict access to Red Yeast Rice Supplements. FDA seemed content to occasionally put out “hit” pieces claiming that Red Yeast Rice was untested, unproven, unregulated, devoid of active ingredients, and all of their usual blah, blah, blah.

Our regular customers know that Apple Health Foods actively discourages folks from chasing cholesterol numbers, but will point out that Red Yeast Rice is a safe alternative to dangerous drugs.

My fond hope has always been that “Modern Medicine’s” sickness would be cured by a bottom-up revolution. As patients would insist on diet/lifestyle/ nutrition solutions, doctors would see the trend and, slowly but surely, follow. So as a growing number of smart people turn away from cholesterol and cholesterol drugs, do we see any evidence that Big Pharma would move any closer to a truly patient-centered approach? On the contrary!

A major vitamin company has just announced a voluntary recall of all of their Red Yeast Rice products. The letter states that the products were found to contain lovastatin (a statin drug). We might be tempted to assume this means that this company was selling a product that had been “spiked” with a drug. What is really going on is that FDA is beginning another of their many attempts at restricting your health freedom by asserting that all Red Yeast Rice products are infringing on drug patents because of the naturally occurring actives in the Red Yeast Rice.

Although the evidence clearly shows that manipulating cholesterol numbers is an exercise in futility, any clear-thinking person would be outraged that FDA would use the force of law to protect Big Pharma and restrict our access to safe, natural alternatives. FDA is hopeful that it can intimidate the natural supplement industry into taking Red Yeast Rice off of the shelves without much of a fight. If FDA can bully a number of prominent companies into compliance, FDA hopes the rest of the industry will give up. Unfortunately, it may just work.

If FDA is successful in banning Red Yeast Rice, I am under no illusion what net effect this will have. A huge number of people still duped by the cholesterol myth will shrug their shoulders and go back to taking liver-toxic statin drugs. Remember, the cholesterol myth is an enormous cash-cow for both industries: Big Pharma and Little Supplements. The economic impact will be to confiscate dollars from the dietary supplement industry and dump it into the laps of the drug companies. FDA plays for keeps: lining drug company pockets and restricting your freedom in one sinister regulatory over-reach.

The supplement industry could fight back and could probably win, but our trade group prides itself on compliance. The Natural Products Association (NPA) recently chose a new leader who comes from FDA and was the head of Dietary Supplement Enforcement. He has just appointed a chief science officer who is also from FDA and an expert on toxicology. These are the folks who are supposed to fight for our health freedom and advocate for diet, lifestyle, and nutrition. Forgive me if I fear that they may be playing for the other team.

Where does this leave all of us? I will point out that while I would fight for access to Red Yeast Rice on principle, we at Apple discourage its use as it just enables the cholesterol myth. We work tirelessly in hopes of showing people the tragic folly of confusing your cholesterol number with your heart health.

Perhaps this crisis will be an opportunity for more people to let go of this whole cholesterol nonsense. Maybe when they see FDA doing its best to force drug compliance, they will adopt an approach that will actually improve cardiovascular health rather than run straight back into the clutches of Big Pharma. We invite you to read the “Heart Disease” edition of The Vitamin Shelf Newsletter which will give you effective strategies for managing arterial inflammation: the real cause of plaque. It is free for the asking here at Apple Health Foods. Call 1-877-277-5343 and we’ll be glad to mail you a copy. You can also find it, and so much more, online at www.TheVitaminShelf.net.

Please stop chasing cholesterol. You might not like what happens when you catch it.



“DAVID’S CHOICE WORDS”

Imagine a world where people would take a daily liver toxin that doubled their risk of diabetes and increased their chances of cataracts, dementia, arterial calcification, muscle weakness, cancer, and Parkinson’s disease. Incredibly, in this make-believe world folks would do this willingly on the advice of a person who was trusted to act in their best interest (despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary). In this imaginary world, cholesterol drug companies make a lot of money.

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