



Sometimes there are no explanations and all you have to do is follow your heart and hope you made the right decision

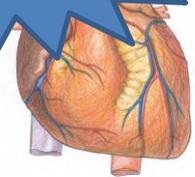
Heart-Health  
Supplement

# Health & Views

Published monthly by Health writer- Dr Harold Gunatillake FRCS, MBBS, AM (Sing), FACS (US), FIACS (US)

This supplement is all about your Heart, not the Great One

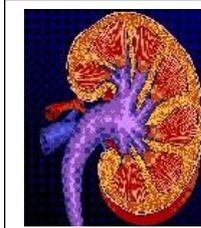
Issues on Heart



## Be aware high doses of statin intake may cause kidney damage

Statin are prescribed world-wide by doctors to bring down the high cholesterol (LDL) levels in your blood, as high cholesterol is considered a risk factor for heart disease and stroke.

TUESDAY, March 19 (HealthDay News) -- People who take high doses of popular cholesterol-lowering drugs called statins may be more likely to develop kidney problems, a new study suggests.



Specifically, those participants who took higher doses of statins were 34 percent more likely to be hospitalized for acute kidney injury during the first 120 days of treatment, compared to their counterparts who were taking lower doses. This risk remained elevated two years after starting treatment. The findings appeared online March 19 in the journal BMJ.

Statin are widely prescribed to lower blood cholesterol levels, and can be very effective. They do, however, confer their share of risks, most notably liver damage and muscle pain or weakness. Doctors currently recommend that people take a liver enzyme test before or shortly after they begin taking statins. The issue of kidney damage as seen in the current study, however, is relatively new.

Canadian researchers analyzed the health records from more than 2 million people aged 40 or older with or without kidney disease who were also taking statins. High-dose statins included rosuvastatin (Crestor) at doses of 10 milligrams (mg) or higher, atorvastatin (Lipitor) at doses of 20 mg or higher and simvastatin (Zocor) at doses of 40 mg. All other statin doses were considered low dose.

Exactly how -- or even if -- statins cause kidney injury is not known. "The elevated risk in patients using high-potency statins could be related to an increased risk of [muscle damage]," Dormuth said. In addition, statins have been shown to block the production of coenzyme Q10 (a substance in the body that helps break down food), which could theoretically lead to kidney injury, he said.

Dormuth said that other studies have shown a link between statin treatment and protein in the urine, which is a hallmark of kidney disease.

Those readers on high doses of statins should get their serum creatinine and urine examination for albumin yearly.

From WebMD by Denise Mann- health day reporter

## Statin effect on exercising

For years, physicians and scientists have been aware that statins, the most widely prescribed drugs in the world, can cause muscle aches and fatigue in some patients. What many people don't know is that these side effects are especially pronounced in people who exercise.

To learn more about the effect statins have on exercising muscles, scientists in Strasbourg, France, recently gave the cholesterol-lowering drug Lipitor to a group of rats for two weeks, while a separate control group was not medicated. Some of the rats from both groups ran on little treadmills until they were exhausted.

It was immediately obvious that the medicated animals couldn't run as far. They became exhausted much earlier than the rats that had not been given statins.

Statin's safety has come under considerable scrutiny in recent weeks. Last month, the Food and Drug Administration added safety alerts to prescribing information for statins, warning of risks for memory loss and diabetes, as well as muscle pain

More than 20 million Americans are taking statins, and by most estimates, at least 10 percent of them will experience some degree of muscle aches or fatigue. That proportion rises to at least 25 percent among people taking statins who regularly exercise, and may be 75 percent or higher among competitive athletes.

## Potassium link with heart function

**Irregular heartbeats-** The heart is composed of smooth muscles contracting and relaxing right through life. Potassium is very important to heart health, and is dependent on it for electrical transmission. When potassium is out of balance in the heart, then the actual heart beat is affected. Large changes are enough to stop it altogether; it is a matter of record that heart attacks are associated with low blood potassium and low potassium intake. It is possible that the lack of potassium in the coronary muscles is a major factor in death from heart disease. The food and Nutrition Board of the National Academy of Sciences has estimated the minimum requirements for potassium for men and women over 18 years of age to be 2,000 milligrams per day.

Most of your potassium comes from fruits and vegetables. While potatoes, though given a bad name provides about one third of the potassium. Meat, poultry, and fish provide about 20 per cent of the potassium.

Potassium is an essential mineral, an electrolyte and assists in muscle contractions and in maintaining body fluid and electrolyte balance in all body cells. It is needed to keep our body's pH in balance. It is essential for the normal electrical activity of the heart. It is necessary for the building of muscle and for normal body growth. It assists in protein synthesis from amino acids and in carbohydrate metabolism.

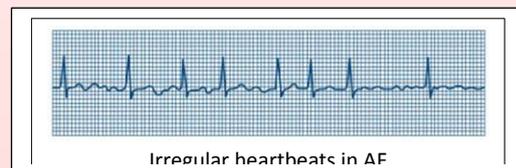
### Coconut water benefits heart function

Young tender coconut water has sufficient potassium to quench your thirst. It is delicious, refreshing and very nutritious and has tremendous health benefits. The water of tender young coconut technically is the liquid endosperm. It is one of the purest, most nutritious wholesome waters and beverages with which nature has provided us. The people in tropical regions and countries have been enjoying this drink for centuries. They have used the all-natural coconut water to refresh, refuel, re-hydrate, feed and maintain the proper nourishment and fluid levels in their bodies. The natural water has a caloric value of 17.4 per 100 gm. The benefits of coconut water are endless and should be an essential and integral part of a healthy diet.

11 Fluid ounces of coconut water contains 530g of potassium, and 85mg of sodium, and contains 65 calories, and no fat content.

A heart attack is when blood flow to a part of the heart is blocked, preventing enough oxygen from getting to the heart. The heart muscle dies or becomes permanently damaged. Your doctor calls this a myocardial infarction.

You can prevent and reverse heart disease



## Irregular Heart Sounds

In healthy people heart sounds are regular and beat at the rate of between 60 and 100 per minute. The athletic type of person with regular training the heart rate drops and most Olympic cross country runners and cyclists it could drop to even about 30 beats per minute. Certain drugs called beta-blockers also can slow the heart rate when given for high blood pressure.

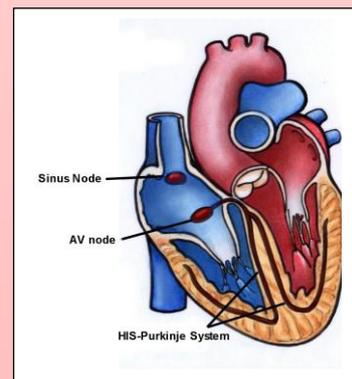
As one ages due to various factors heart rate may become irregular and you need to worry about it.

### Atrial fibrillation

Atrial fibrillation (AFib) is a condition that disrupts the body's regular heartbeat. It is the most common irregular heart rhythm that starts in the atria (upper chambers). A glitch in the heart's electrical system makes the upper chambers (the atria) quiver. This causes the lower chambers (the ventricles) to beat irregularly. Due to inconsistent contractions of the atria blood could clot within and get distributed to other regions of the body, including the brain. AFib can be dangerous because it raises the risk of stroke and heart failure.

### Warning Sign: Uneven Pulse

Normally the SA node (sinus node) directs electrical impulses through a tract called 'bundle of His' to the AV node and the electrical impulses are regularly distributed to both lower chambers of the heart. In AF the AV node limits the impulses being conducted to the ventricles (lower chambers), and gets through in a disorganised and fast manner.



In many people, AFib does not cause obvious warning signs. When symptoms do occur, they often include:

- An uneven pulse
- A racing or pounding heart
- A feeling that the heart is fluttering
- Chest pain

Such irregular heart beats can cause a fast irregular heart rate (100-175 beats per minute).

A warning sign is a feeling of **dizziness** due to insufficient oxygenated blood pumped into the brain cells.

**Breathless-** Irregular heart beats can affect the blood supply through the coronaries to the heart muscles and cause breathlessness as in coronary insufficiency.

**Weakness and fatigue** due to insufficient flow of blood to the muscles and organs. **Fainting attacks** due to insufficient blood rushing into the brain.

**Stroke** is a possibility due to blood clots from the left lower chamber being sent to the brain as emboli.

If you detect an irregular pulse rhythm, with any of the above symptoms, get the ambulance and rush to the emergency care in the closest hospital.

## Heart Health & Rheumatoid Arthritis

If you consider heart disease a man's disease, it's time to reconsider -- especially if you have rheumatoid arthritis. Post-menopausal women have a rate of heart disease two to three times higher than younger women. For women with inflammatory diseases like RA, the risk is even greater, making a heart-healthy lifestyle -- including healthy food choices -- even more important.

### Eat to Fight Inflammation

In women with RA, the same inflammatory process that makes your joints sore, hot, and swollen may contribute to artery-clogging atherosclerosis and the formation of clots, which ultimately may lead to heart attacks and strokes.

Research shows that certain foods contribute to inflammation, while others help fight it. Foods that may contribute to inflammation include those high in omega-6 fatty acids, found in corn, sunflower, safflower, soybean, and cottonseed oil. They are prevalent in many snack foods, fried foods, and margarines as well as in meats and egg yolks. One study by Ohio State University researchers found that people who consumed much more omega-6 -- compared to another type of fatty acids called omega-3 that are found in fish and olive oil -- had higher levels of inflammatory chemicals in their blood.

Omega-3 fatty acids, on the other hand, may reduce inflammation. Good sources include cold-water fatty fish such as salmon, trout, mackerel, tuna, sardines, and herring. Omega-3s may lessen joint pain, shorten the amount of time that morning stiffness lasts, and even enable some people with arthritis to reduce their dose or stop taking nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). To get more omega-3s in your diet, try adding about two 3-ounce servings of seafood to your menu each week.

### Eat to Lose or Maintain Weight

Losing weight -- if you need to -- or maintaining a proper weight gives you a double benefit: It lowers your risk of heart disease and the pressure your body puts on painful joints. If you are overweight, losing weight may also help reduce inflammation, because fat cells produce inflammatory chemicals. The recipe for maintaining a proper weight is simple, although it isn't always easy: Start by figuring out how many calories you need each day and don't eat more than you can burn off in a day. If you want to lose weight, of course, you'll need to eat less than you burn. Get in the habit of checking calorie amounts in the foods you eat. The labels on packaged goods, many cookbooks, web sites, and even cell phone applications give the calorie counts of common foods. Use them to make a meal plan and be conscious of what you eat. Keeping a food diary for a while can help.

## How to avoid Heart Disease

Limit the saturated fat in your diet to less than 7% of calories.

Choose heart-healthy sources of fat, such as salmon and other fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, nuts, and olives.

Do a brisk walk for at least 30 minutes daily.

Eat less and stay slim.

Cut down stressful factors in your life. Meditation may help.

## You are diagnosed Heart Disease



Your cardiologist has diagnosed coronary artery disease after doing a stress ECG on you and with blood pressure -- systolic over 200 and diastolic over 100.

You'll be most distressed that the end is near, and you'll wonder how you could change your lifestyle to recover from the heart condition. Is it possible? will be in your mind. The answer is yes.

How can you do it?

Dean Ornish, MD, founder and president of the Preventive Medicine Research Institute and clinical professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, says that you absolutely can reverse at least some of the damage of even severe heart disease. Indeed, one of his six best-selling books is titled Dr. Dean Ornish's Program for Reversing Heart Disease.

In his 2007 book *The Spectrum*, Ornish describes patients waiting to undergo a heart transplant -- those with the worst possible damage -- who enrolled in his program while on the transplant list. Some of them, he says, improved so much that they no longer needed a transplant.

"Our studies show that, with significant lifestyle changes, blood flow to the heart and its ability to pump normally improve in less than a month, and the frequency of chest pains fell by 90% in that time," Ornish says. "Within a year on our program, even severely blocked arteries in the heart became less blocked, and there was even more reversal after five years. That's compared with the natural history in other patients in our study, in which the heart just got worse and worse

Those lifestyle measures include exercise -- Ornish calls for people to walk at least half an hour a day, or an hour three times a week. Your cupboards, refrigerator, and dinner table will also need a total transformation if you expect to have a chance of actually reversing heart disease, not just preventing it or stopping its progression.

"Just making moderate changes in your diet may be enough to prevent heart disease, but it won't be enough to reverse it," Ornish says.

In essence, that means becoming a vegetarian, filling your plate with fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes, soy products, nonfat dairy, and egg whites, and keeping away from fats, refined sugar, and carbohydrates. "You want to eat foods in their natural form as much as possible," Ornish says.

Ornish's program also calls for regular yoga, meditation, and stress reduction.

Ref: WebMD

## Chelation for Cardiovascular Disease

Although chelation therapy with the drug disodium EDTA has been used for many years with limited evidence of efficacy for the treatment of coronary disease, a randomized trial that included patients with a prior heart attack found that use of a chelation regimen modestly reduced the risk of a composite of adverse cardiovascular outcomes, but the findings do not support the routine use of chelation therapy for treatment of patients who have had a heart attack, according to a study in the March 27 issue of JAMA.

Chelation therapy is an intravenous administration of chelating agents (such as disodium ethylene diamine tetraacetic acid [EDTA]) to treat heavy metal toxicity. Based on favorable anecdotal and case report experience, chelation therapy has evolved in recent decades to include treatment for coronary and peripheral artery disease. "Three small clinical trials have assessed the effects of chelation on surrogate outcomes, such as walking distance in patients with claudication and time to exercise-induced ischemia in patients with coronary disease. These studies did not find any evidence of treatment efficacy but were underpowered for evaluation of clinical events," according to background information in the article. Therapy for Cardiovascular Disease

Ref: Medical News Today



Only in India

## Coffee Drinking

Moderate consumption of coffee drinking may be good for your heart

The new research adds to a range of recent studies that have shown that coffee may protect against some illnesses, including type 2 diabetes, Parkinson's disease, liver cancer and cirrhosis of the liver, and might improve exercise performance

## Eating Fish diminishes risk of Heart Disease



When it comes to heart health it is important to look beyond the medicine cabinet.

Just a few small changes — eating more fish, vegetables, nuts and fiber — can have a major impact on your risk for heart problems. For some people, drinking moderate amounts of wine may offer additional benefits. Even a 55-year-old man who is about 20 pounds overweight and does not exercise regularly will have a heart-disease risk far below average if he regularly consumes fish, nuts, fiber and vegetables and drinks moderate amounts of wine.

It's hard to believe that such simple food changes can make a meaningful difference, but data from hundreds of studies show they can.

For instance, a review of nearly 100 studies evaluating various cholesterol-lowering agents and diets showed just how potent fish can be as a heart protector. In studies of people who consume diets rich in omega-3 fatty acids like those found in fish, heart risk was 23 percent lower compared with a control group. The 2005 review appeared in The Archives of Internal Medicine.

The same report also reviewed studies of statin use and showed a 13 percent lower heart risk. Because it was not a head-to-head comparison, it cannot be concluded that eating fish is better than using statins. But the results clearly show the powerful effect of fish in the diet.

Many studies of fish consumption and heart health are based on observation of Eskimos and people in Mediterranean regions. And random clinical trials have shown that consuming omega-3 fatty acids can reduce heart attacks and cardiovascular death. These fatty acids can also slow the progress of atherosclerosis in coronary patients, according to the American Heart Association.

People worry about exposure to mercury and toxins from fish, but experts say that for middle-age and older men and postmenopausal women, the benefits of fish far outweigh the risks of exposure to environmental pollutants

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