

# Back to Eden

Slippery Elm  
Ice Cream  
Heart Health  
Poly-carbonate bottles  
Recipe  
Health Series

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Quite a few of readers have notified me of their e mail address over the past few months. This does save us quite an amount in printing and postage. So to those of you who have an e mail address, do let me know and in future I will send them via this way. It still can be printed out by the receiver and kept as a hard copy for those who have been saving all of the back issues for reference.

We have recently conducted a 6 week course that went over all the principles of health that we have been teaching here in Albury for over the past eleven years. These principles are the foundation of having good health. I also added a small segment each week on natural remedies. For years I have loved teaching this seminar. It is satisfying to see people use these simple remedies and get results from them. I will run some courses again later in the year if there is the demand, so if anyone is interested in attending these course in the future, please let me know. I need to find out the best time and day of the week that suits the most people.

The courses that are offered are

1. Health Education
2. Vegetarian Cooking
3. Natural Remedies
4. Sour Dough Breadmaking

Do not forget that we are again bringing Barbara O'Neill to Albury in May. Those who have heard her in the past know what an excellent speaker she is. Book early and do invite your friends. Her topics this time deal with the mind and how we can think clearly. So many complain that they are unable to think clearly - well come and hear what she says is the answer to this problem. Details are on page 8.

From Kaye and the Back to Eden Team

## Slippery Elm...

### an old fashioned remedy

Well before the first European settlers arrived in North America, Native American tribes had discovered that by scraping away the rough outer bark of the majestic slippery elm tree (*Ulmus rubra*), they could uncover a remarkable healing substance in the inner bark. They beat the bark into a powder and added water to create a "slippery" concoction ideal for soothing toothaches, healing abrasions, and dispelling constipation. It is considered one of the most valuable remedies in herbal practice, the abundant mucilage it contains having wonderfully strengthening and healing qualities. The inner bark of Slippery Elm was an important food and medicine for the American Indians and by their teaching, for the early pioneers. It was made into a poultice for wounds, burns, etc. especially for "green" or purulent wounds. Indians taught the white man the use of the bark not only for poultices but as a medication in fevers and diarrhea.

Later, surgeons in the American Civil War turned to this wilderness remedy to treat gunshot wounds with poultices of slippery elm. They realised by placing Slippery Elm directly on the wound, it regenerated skin tissue. Countless lives were saved using this remedy. During the same period, a wholesome and nutritious broth made from the bark was fed to infants and older people.

In addition to its use in wound treatments in the Civil War it was also used as a source of quick energy nutriment for soldiers and often those who had lost their way supported themselves on a jelly made with its bark and that of Sassafras. Indians also used it as a nutritive and subsisted for long

periods of time upon it. "When crops failed or long severe winters exhausted food supplies, Indians and pioneers alike were often saved from starvation by the use of Sweet Elm Bark. This emergency source of food had the advantage of being available when all other sources of food had failed. The use of Sweet Elm bark as food spread with the early colonies until the day when the vast forests were converted into farm lands"

It is recorded that during their bitter winter at Valley Forge, George Washington's soldiers lived through a twelve day period on little more than Slippery Elm porridge. And no one knows how many starving pioneers families scraped through their first winters in early America thanks to the same survival rations. Back before today's sugar-laden sweets were so widely available, small boys would strip off pieces of the inner bark and chew it. This made a sweet flavored, long lasting chewing gum that both satisfied thirst and supplied a certain amount of nourishment. The taste is pleasant and sweet although the slippery texture of the gruel takes a little bit of getting used to.

Long recognized by health authorities in America and Australia as an effective medicine, slippery elm bark presently has the approval of the Food and Drug Administration as a nonprescription demulcent (soothing agent) that can be taken internally.

### Health Benefits

The popularity of slippery elm bark has endured, no doubt, because it works so well for coating and soothing irritated or inflamed mucus membranes. This is the work of an ingredient in the inner bark called mucilage, a gummy, gel-like substance that when ingested forms a protective layer along the throat, digestive tract, and other areas. Astringent compounds in the herb called

tannins help tighten and constrict the tissue. It not only soothes and heals all that it comes into contact with, but is highly nutritious.

For the same reasons, salves and ointments containing slippery elm have long been popular for coating well-cleaned minor wounds and burns to protect them from further injury. Applied to wounds, burns and inflammation of any kind, slippery elm will help to soothe, heal and reduce swelling and pain.

Slippery elm drink is generally made by mixing a teaspoonful of the powder into a thin and perfectly smooth paste with cold water and then pouring on a litre of boiling water, steadily stirring meanwhile. It can, if desired, be flavoured with honey or lemon rind. This excellent drink is taken in cases of irritation of the mucous membrane of the stomach and intestines, and if taken at night will induce sleep.

Taken unsweetened, three times a day, it gives excellent results in gastritis, gastric catarrh, mucous colitis and enteritis, being tolerated by the stomach when all other foods fail, and is of great value in bronchitis, bleeding from the lungs and consumption (being most healing to the lungs), soothing a cough and building up and preventing wasting.

### **Soothes a cough, sore throat, and bronchitis**

Slippery Elm throat lozenges are particularly effective for easing a cough and soothing a sore throat, coating the area and reducing irritation. Warm slippery elm bark tea works for cough and sore throats too, as does a liquid extract. And for the pain of acute bronchitis, there may be no more soothing balm than several cups of slippery elm tea to lubricate and protect raw and irritated airways.

Because coughs are often associated with digestive disruption, particularly of the eliminative tract, Slippery Elm is wonderful in the correcting of coughs. It soothes the mucous membranes directly. Many people make lozenges of the herb mixing it with maple syrup or honey until a stiff paste forms and then chilling it till quite firm and cutting it into pieces. It is a harmless confection thus to give children and will help "roll down" the mucous out of the system as it soothes the cough. It also reduces the inflammation of the surfaces.

### **Eases gastrointestinal symptoms**

Slippery Elm is classed among the demulcent and emollient herbs, soothing substances with much mucilage that soothe tissues and help remove inflammation and mucous wherever they are used. Slippery Elm is particularly useful because its abundant mucilage soothes, disperses inflammation, draws out impurities, heals rapidly and greatly strengthens as it heals. It is especially good for irritated or inflamed surfaces. One of the foremost uses of the herb is for internal irritation, especially of the digestive tract. As mentioned above, Slippery Elm is usually retained and digested when no other food or liquid is tolerated. It normalizes bowel functions very quickly either stopping diarrhea or helping bring about a bowel movement. It is one of the mildest of laxatives and can be taken by anyone, children or pregnant women alike, as it is absolutely harmless. If the mucous membrane of the stomach or intestines is irritated Slippery Elm will speedily restore it to its proper function. When babies are teething, their digestion often becomes disrupted. They are often hungry but don't want to eat their normal food. Slippery Elm gruel sweetened with honey seems to nourish them, balance their system and help bring back a normal appetite. Slippery Elm's soothing mucilage effect is also used for gastritis, Crohn's disease, and ulcerative colitis. Even the discomforts of heartburn or an ulcer may respond to this old-time home remedy.

### **External use as a poultice**

The Red Indians have long used this viscous inner bark to prepare a healing salve, and in herbal medicine a Slippery Elm bark powder is considered one of the best possible poultices for wounds, boils, ulcers, burns and all inflamed surfaces, soothing, healing and reducing pain and inflammation. It can also be used in conjunction with other herbs and is a great base for holding the other herbs together in the poultice.

It is made as follows: Mix the powder with hot water to form the required consistency (reasonably wet but not runny), spread smoothly upon soft cotton cloth and apply over the parts affected. It is unailing in cases of suppurations (discharge of pus), abscesses, wounds of all kinds, congestion, eruptions, swollen glands, etc. In simple inflammation, it may be applied directly onto the skin over the

part affected; eg to abscesses and old wounds, or it could be placed between very thin cloths. If applied to parts of the body where there is hair, the face of the poultice should be smeared with olive oil before applying. Cover the applied poultice with plastic and then a bandage to keep it in place. In the case of only a very small sore, use a bandaid to cover it. Change the poultice often as required, or from every 3 hours to 2 times daily. (The more toxic the sore, the more often the poultice needs to be changed). Make sure the poultice remains moist.

Slippery Elm makes a wonderful poultice, applied locally, for drawing out toxins, especially those associated with boils, spots or abscesses and can assist the removal of splinters.

### **More poultices**

In old gangrenous wounds, an excellent antiseptic poultice is prepared by mixing with warm water or an infusion of Wormwood, equal parts of Slippery Elm powder and very fine charcoal and applying immediately over the part.

A valuable poultice in cases where it is desirable to hasten a discharge of pus or arrest the tendency to gangrene is made by mixing the Slippery Elm powder with brewer's yeast and new milk.

Compound Bran poultice is made by mixing with hot Apple Cider vinegar equal quantities of Wheat Bran with Slippery Elm powder. This is an excellent poultice for severe rheumatic and gouty affections, particularly of the joints, synovitis etc.

Herbal poultices, generally made from the bruised, fresh leaves of special herbs, are frequently mixed with Slippery Elm and boiling water sufficient to give the mass consistency.

As an external application for chest colds, mix equal parts of cornflour and Slippery Elm powder, along with no more than 10% mustard powder. Make into a poultice with hot water and spread on a white muslin or flannel and apply to the chest.

It has been asserted that a pinch of the Slippery Elm powder put into a hollow tooth stops the ache and greatly delays decay, if used as soon as there is any sign of decay.

Slippery Elm is often recommended for problems with the genitourinary tract. Many herbalists recommend making vaginal or rectal boluses with the herb itself, making a stiff but pliable mixture

with water the size and shape of the middle finger. This is cut into three pieces and placed in the vagina holding in with a tampon. It is left in for two days, removed and washed out with a douche. This is beneficial for inflammation and irritation of the vagina. It is said to be useful for excruciating pain of the testes which accompany the metastasis of mumps, whether of recent or long standing. The bark in this case is used as a poultice. This will help remove the pain quickly. It is often used as an herbal enema to gently help move old, encrusted feces. It will help with hemorrhoids if applied externally.

## Historical uses

Used for bedsores, dehydration and malnutrition, vaginal problems, rectal problems, wounds, burns, gangrene, fevers, diarrhea, inflamed eyes, stomach ulcers, swelling, consumption, rheumatism, dysentery, toothache, boils and carbuncles, sore throat, bleeding of lungs, chapped hands and face, nourishment for the sickly, poison ivy, splinters, broken bones, appendicitis, whooping cough, leprosy, suppressed urine, dropsy, hard tumours, bladder inflammation, to procure easy labour, to accelerate healing, as a laxative, to neutralize stomach acid, to absorb foul gases, for coughs, chest troubles, tuberculosis, the great white plague, dyspnea, urinary tract problems, hemorrhoids, baldness, sciatica, as a lubricant in labor, to provoke abortion, purulent ophthalmia, chilblains, croup, pneumonia, calculi, burning urine, all catarrhal disturbances, bronchial, and to remove phlegm. Even young animals have been weaned on Slippery Elm gruel.

You can make a healthy confection that is also good for the bowels by grinding dried fruits and nuts together, sweetening with honey and adding Slippery Elm to help bind it. Mix equal amounts of carob powder and Slippery Elm and coat each ball that you roll in your hands. Refrigerate if desired. This is delicious and a great substitute for other candies.

Some friends have experimented with using a thin Slippery Elm mixture and applying it to their facial skin as a face pack. They say it draws out the impurities and makes the skin feel smooth. When it is mixed to a thin paste, it may be used as a hair conditioner on freshly washed hair. Leave on for about 4 hours and then rinse off and dry. This makes the hair feel soft. This is especially

good on dry and damaged hair.

Dr. Shook, (a early American herbalist) recommended a Slippery Elm preparation which included quite a few other herbs. He thought that it was an "extraordinary and sensational remedy which should be carefully prepared and always kept on hand by every physician interested in giving prompt relief from pain, spasm, distress and exhaustion in that debilitating affliction, asthma. We sincerely believe that this most merciful and beneficent herb preparation will cure almost any chest trouble including many cases of tuberculosis, the great white plague which kills off countless thousands of our people every year". He also said that it would help bronchitis, chronic cough, lung trouble and so forth. It allays all irritation and gives almost instant relief in dyspnea caused by heart disease.

Dr John Cristopher says that as a healing nutritive it is often considered almost an elixir; "we cannot speak too highly of this remedy, and are confident there is nothing to equal it in the world..."

Jethro Kloss says of the Slippery Elm poultice "This poultice has no superior in the line of poultices, either used alone or combined".

Some people develop an allergic rash when Slippery Em is applied to the skin; stop using (externally and internally) if this happens. Aside from the risk of an allergic skin reaction, there are no side effects associated with the use of Slippery Em at commonly recommended dosages. There are no known drug or

nutrient interactions associated with Slippery Elm.

## Case studies

A young boy had spent some months confined to a bed. He developed very bad bed sores. Poultices of Slippery Elm were placed on his back and spine. He was also given Slippery Elm gruel to eat, one teaspoon at a time. Within weeks the flesh had regrown.

Golden staph had infected a wound after an operation. It had become quite a nasty sore. Doctors were unable to prescribe anything to help. After applications of Slippery Elm directly on the skin, the sore healed nicely.

After an operation, the surgeon left behind a stitch. The skin had grown over it leaving a small lump on the three year old child's heel. For two months she would not wear any shoes because they pressed on the lump causing discomfort. The surgeon suggested he would have to lance the lump to remove the stitch. The mother instead mixed a small amount of Slippery Elm with water and placed onto the lump. It was held in place with two bandaids and was applied for four nights. This drew the imbedded stitch to the surface. It was then gently squeezed and the stitch just popped out.

Slippery Elm bark can be purchased from health stores. A small supply can be purchased for \$10-\$20. Keep a supply of it on hand for any emergency that may arise. It will keep for years and will not lose any of its properties.

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## Ice Cream...is not what it used to be

Today, in this mass producing, synthetic age, there is a good possibility that you are treating your family to another poison if you buy some cheap supermarket brands of ice cream. Ice cream manufacturers are not required by law to list the additives used in the making of ice cream. Consequently, today the majority of ice creams are synthetic from start to finish. Laboratory analyses have shown the following

Diethyl Glucol: A cheap chemical that is used as an emulsifier instead of eggs. It is identically the same chemical used in anti-freeze and in paint removers.  
Piperonal: Used as a substitute for vanilla. This is a chemical used to kill lice.

Aldehyde C17: Used to flavour cherry ice cream. It is an inflammable liquid which is used in aniline dyes, plastic and rubber.

Ethyl Acetate: Used to give ice cream a pineapple flavour. It is used as a cleanser for leather and textiles and its vapors have known to cause chronic lung, liver, and heart damage.

Amyl Acetate: Used for its strawberry flavour. It is a nitrate solvent.

The next time you are tempted by a luscious-looking sundae or ice cream smmothie, think of it as containing anti-freeze, oil paint, paint remover, nitrate solvent, leather cleaner and lice killer, and you may not find it so appetising.

# Heart Disease:

## .....Conquering the Number One Killer

Condensed from **PROOF POSITIVE:** by Neil Nedley M.D.

Heart disease is the number one killer in the industrialized countries. Contrary to popular misconceptions, heart disease is not only a disease of men. In America, heart disease is the leading killer of men and women alike.

Sadly, deaths only tell part of the story of this dreadful disease. If you personally happen to survive a stroke, the average lifetime cost in medical bills and lost earnings will be astronomical. How much better to prevent a stroke or a heart attack than to pay for one and still suffer the diminished quality of life that is almost certain to follow!

Better prevention programs could cut deaths due to heart disease (especially coronary heart disease) by about 50 percent, evidence suggests that optimal prevention programs could cut heart disease deaths by as much as 90 percent. In short, although heart disease is by far the number one cause of death in America, it does not need to be. Nine out of ten heart attacks may be preventable!

### The Development of Heart and Blood Vessel Disease

Many people who have heart disease are not aware of it. This is because heart disease usually develops silently. Before any damage to the heart occurs, a process called atherosclerosis (or "hardening of the arteries") has been taking place in the arteries of the heart for many years. The early phase of atherosclerosis is called a "fatty streak." The process of atherosclerosis is not confined to the heart arteries (known as "coronary arteries"). The term "coronary artery disease" refers specifically to the gradual narrowing of atherosclerosis as it affects the heart arteries. Large and medium sized arteries throughout the body can become narrowed by this buildup of fatty material as a plaque is formed.

Atherosclerosis progresses at different rates in different people. Early atherosclerosis may be present at age 20. This is common in Western nations. In fact, it may be present at age 10 or 15. By the time a person reaches 20, fatty streaks can be so prominent that they are clearly visible when the coronary artery is cut open. If the unhealthy lifestyle continues, by age 30 the plaques progress to become even more pronounced. By age 40, it is not unusual to have significant coronary artery blockages that reduce the diameter of

the artery by more than half. Even at this point, the effects of 30 years worth of atherosclerosis will likely still be "silent." Most individuals have no symptoms at all.

If symptoms do arise, they may be vague or "atypical," or they may be classic "angina pectoris". Angina pectoris refers to chest pain on exertion or severe emotional stress that is usually described as a heaviness, pressure, or tightness centred in the middle or left side of the chest. The pain can travel up to the neck or jaw or down either arm. Occasionally there is also back or stomach area pain. A large meal or cold weather may also precipitate this pain. The symptom of pain is caused by an insufficient blood supply to the heart muscle, an is referred to as "coronary insufficiency". Many suffer from angina pectoris but unfortunately have no symptoms until they have their first heart attack. Even under situations of significant exertion, a heart artery must have at least 50 to 60 percent of its diameter blocked before the heart muscle suffers from lack of blood supply, which is the cause of Angina pain. Many individuals with narrowing even in the 70 percent range or greater have no recognizable symptoms.

As a result of the lack of symptoms, heart disease is often not detected in its earlier stages. A person may feel great, be working full time, and yet be on the verge of a major heart attack and perhaps even sudden death. Approximately 60 percent of heart attack deaths occur suddenly or outside of a hospital before treatment can be administered. Over half of all sudden deaths (almost two-thirds of sudden death cases in women) occur in individuals who were not previously diagnosed with coronary artery disease. It is a sobering reality for many that their first heart attack is their only heart attack. Sudden death offers no second chances. Even when people survive a heart attack, over two-thirds do not make a complete recovery, leaving them with some form of disability and a permanently decreased quality of life. Following a heart attack, the heart is weaker because of lost muscle tissue.

This weakness can be significant, particularly if the heart attack was large. In such a case, the heart may be unable to adequately perform even routine pumping functions. When such a diseased heart is not able to keep the body functions going, physicians use the term "congestive heart failure." In this situation, an affected individual may get

Any articles authored by Americans use different figures to measure their cholesterol levels. To convert these figures to the Australian figures, divide the American number by 38.5. This will give the Australian equivalent. I have endeavoured to do this in this article. To be concluded next newsletter.

short of breath easily, experience feet or ankle swelling, or be generally fatigued.

To prevent these progressive steps from leading to a fatal or crippling heart attack, it is unwise to put off heart evaluations until symptoms develop. Various medical tests are available to diagnose heart disease before a fatal event.

### The Different Kinds of Heart and Blood Vessel Disease

As the term cardiovascular disease implicates, heart attacks are not the only manifestation of this disease. Strokes are also often caused by atherosclerosis. Complete blockage of a brain artery results in the death of any brain tissue that depended on the blood flow in that artery. It is the death of brain tissue that is called a stroke. Although most people know that strokes commonly paralyse half of the body, they can cause other serious difficulties. For example, they can cause blindness, inability to speak or hear, and severe personality or memory problems. The actual problems that occur depend on what part of the brain is damaged.

Atherosclerosis, as we have already noted, tends to affect all of the large and medium sized blood vessels throughout the body. Aortic aneurysms typically result when the lining of the aorta is weakened by atherosclerosis. Because of the high pressures in this great artery, the weakened wall can balloon out like a bad spot on a tyre. A ruptured aortic aneurysm is usually a death sentence. Massive internal bleeding occurs literally within a matter of seconds or minutes. If one of the renal arteries becomes significantly narrowed, a person can develop high blood pressure, or—even worse—lose the function of that kidney entirely.

Other atherosclerosis-related conditions many not cause death but will rob the quality of life, allowing the afflicted individuals to live with varying degrees of misery. For example, male impotence, leg pain when walking (called "intermittent claudication"), limping, and gangrene can result from atherosclerosis in the femoral arteries in the thigh, shown in the figure, and posterior tibial arteries in the lower leg and ankle. When atherosclerosis affects heart and brain arteries, peripheral arteries supplying the legs and arms are often also narrowed. Gangrene can result in blood poisoning and death if amputation is not carried out promptly.

## Keys to Preventing Heart Disease

There are some factors that influence our risk of heart disease that we can do nothing about. For example, age and sex cannot be changed, yet they have a significant bearing on cardiovascular risk. The older we are, the greater our risk. Similarly, men are at higher risk than women of the same age—particularly in the years before menopause. Fortunately, however, medical research demonstrates that we can change a number of factors that influence our risk of heart disease. The three most important modifiable heart disease risk factors are cigarette smoking, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.

Addressing all three can make a considerable impact, as was illustrated by a study of some 29,000 Finnish men and women over a 20-year period (1972 to 1992). When these individuals lowered the cholesterol in their diets, lowered their blood pressure, and stopped their tobacco use, they reduced their heart attack risk by more than half.

Cholesterol is an important and essential natural compound. This white, waxy fat is manufactured in our bodies and is used to build cell walls and make certain hormones. However, too much cholesterol in the blood stream (called “serum cholesterol”) can contribute to atherosclerosis. For this reason, high blood cholesterol level as a single factor correlates well with coronary heart disease death rate. The higher the cholesterol level the greater the death rate.

### Serum Cholesterol and Mortality Risk.

We have already observed that heart disease and atherosclerosis begin early in life in Western nations. Individuals 30 years of age and younger have commonly been found to have deposits of atherosclerotic fatty streaks on the inner walls of their arteries. The size of the wall area that is covered is greater in individuals in this age range with high blood cholesterol levels. Note that those with a cholesterol level of 6.0 have over 50 percent of their blood vessels’ surface area covered with early atherosclerotic fatty streaks. This amounts to roughly five times the amount of fatty buildup than that of a person with a more ideal cholesterol level of 2.9. The evidence is clear: high blood cholesterol does damage to the arteries even in people under 30. Some people mistakenly assume that heart disease is reserved for the elderly, but 5 percent of all heart attacks occur in people under the age of 40, and 45 percent of all heart attacks occur in people under the age of 65.

Some experts have for years asserted that an ideal cholesterol is 100 plus your age (American figure). Support for this value comes from a number of perspectives. Two examples may prove helpful. First, when international comparisons are made, countries

with extremely low risks of heart disease tend to have average cholesterol levels that run 2.5 – 3.5. Second, extensive data on the U.S. population was gathered in the course of the Multiple Risk Factor Intervention Trial (MRFIT). Among the more than 300,000 men studied, the risk of death from heart disease began to increase when total cholesterol exceeded 3.2. A cholesterol level of 3.2 is far below the 5.2 level which many people mistakenly think is ideal.

### Cholesterol's Subtypes: HDL and LDL

Cholesterol never travels alone in our arteries and veins. It always travels in different carriers or vehicles. Each type of vehicle has a different weight or density. Due to this fact, we can put blood cholesterol in a device called an ultracentrifuge and divide it into fractions according to the density of its vehicles. The heaviest carriers of cholesterol are called HDL or high density lipoprotein. Some lighter weight carriers are named low density lipoprotein (LDL), while a still lighter vehicle is called very low density lipoprotein (VLDL).

Today we are able to use these cholesterol fractions as better indicators of heart disease risk than total cholesterol levels alone. For example, HDL actually protects us from heart disease. The reason for this is that HDL actually removes cholesterol from the arteries. The HDL vehicle then carries that cholesterol to the liver, where the body disposes of the fatty material through the bile.

LDL (low density lipoprotein), on the other hand, is the so-called “bad cholesterol” that is linked to an increased risk of heart disease. It is probably a certain type of cholesterol within LDL that is the bad actor, namely, oxidized cholesterol. Later in the chapter we will explore this toxic compound in detail. For now, let me affirm the well-known fact that the level of LDL in the blood is an important determinant of the rate at which cholesterol is deposited in the artery walls.

It is important to compare the ratio between the level of LDL and HDL in the blood. Do not look to having an “average” ratio, as the typical person who has a heart attack has a reading that is considered average. The message is that before a heart attack strikes, adopt a better lifestyle program. Try to get your total cholesterol/HDL ratio into the ideal range.

### How to Achieve the Best Cholesterol Levels

How can we improve our cholesterol levels? Specifically, how can we decrease total cholesterol and LDL and at the same time raise HDL? The answer to this question is extremely important. To fully appreciate the answers, however, we must make sure we

understand where cholesterol comes from.

It is of primary importance that we recognize that our livers manufacture more than enough cholesterol for all our body functions. For this reason, **we do not need to eat any cholesterol whatsoever.** In other words, **cholesterol is totally unnecessary in the human diet.** However, many of us get significant amounts of cholesterol from our foods. In fact, the average American eats about 300mg of cholesterol every day. Where does all this cholesterol come from? **Note that all the cholesterol we eat comes from animal products. It is critical that we understand that fruits, vegetables, grains, and even nuts contain no cholesterol.** If the food comes exclusively from plant products, then it has no cholesterol in it. On the other hand, if the food product comes from an animal, it almost always has cholesterol in it. (A few exceptions exist where the cholesterol-containing portion of the animal product has been removed. Egg whites would be the main example of this.)

Many still do not understand the basic prevalence of cholesterol in animal foods. They think that if they eat chicken, turkey, or fish they are not getting cholesterol. On the contrary, we see that every animal product contains cholesterol. Also, take note that chicken contains about the same amount as pork and beef. This bad news about “white meat” has not received much press. Furthermore, many kinds of fish have a high cholesterol content. To what extent does our intake of cholesterol affect our blood cholesterol level? The more cholesterol we eat, the higher our blood cholesterol tends to be.

### Typical Sources of Dietary Cholesterol

Note that 35 percent of the cholesterol consumed in America each day comes from meat, fowl, and fish, and another 35 percent comes from eggs. The cooking fats and oils that contain cholesterol are animal in origin, such as butter, lard, and other fats. Commercial baked goods tend to use lard, which accounts for eight percent of the cholesterol consumed per day. This figure shows that we can lower our cholesterol intake by 70 percent just by eliminating eggs, red meat, poultry, and fish. Of course we can lower it even further just by eliminating more of the animal products. If we really want to eliminate all the cholesterol in our diet, essentially all animal products must go.

Many people do not understand the difference between the two fats. Saturated fat is solid at room temperature and the polyunsaturated fat is liquid. Generally, the more solid the fat, the more saturated it is. Most fats from animal products are predominately saturated, while most plant products are high in polyunsaturated fats.

## Vegetable Fat's Effect on Cholesterol

In contrast to animal fats, vegetable fats have no cholesterol at all. There are different kinds of vegetable fats, and all but a few are highly polyunsaturated. Coconut is a highly saturated fat and will tend to raise cholesterol levels. Although coconut has no cholesterol, its saturated fat content dramatically increases blood cholesterol. On the other end of the spectrum, walnuts can have a rather dramatic effect in lowering an individual's cholesterol.

Most nuts, in view of their fat content, are "heart healthy" foods. Nuts in general have been studied extensively and have been found not only to lower blood cholesterol levels, but also to provide a corresponding decrease in the risk of heart disease.

This study on nut consumption was conducted at Loma Linda University and has received international attention. The initial study focused on the amount of nuts eaten by the participants in the Adventist Health Study. They found that those consuming nuts less than once per week had the highest risk of heart attack. Those who consumed nuts one to four times per week lowered their risk about 25 percent. Those who consumed nuts more than five times a week cut their risk in half. The study was controlled for other lifestyle variables so that the researchers could be more certain that the nuts were the only factor involved. Many health professionals were surprised by the findings of this study. Previously, health professionals commonly encouraged patients to avoid nuts because of their high fat content. Now we know that nuts in **small to moderate amounts** are part of a healthful diet because they supply some fat nutrients that are beneficial for preventing heart disease.

Regarding peanuts, the fat in peanuts has a specific chemistry and triglyceride structure (apart from the saturated and polyunsaturated content) that makes them surprisingly harder on your arteries than other vegetable fats. Thus, a person who wants to protect his arteries would be wise to choose other nuts such as almonds, walnuts, or pecans in place of peanuts. Almonds have another advantage. They are unique among the nut food group in that they contain far more vitamin E than other nuts; in fact, they exceed just about all other foods in this regard. We will see later that vitamin E reduces the risk of heart disease

## The Very Low Fat Theory

The research on nuts has helped to lay to rest a popular but fictitious approach to heart disease prevention sometimes called "the very low fat theory." For years, many have advocated that to maximally reduce the heart attack rate we must cut the fat in large amounts, to about 10 percent of calories. Some people have become famous by

advocating such a very low fat diet. Unfortunately, very low fat diets are often not palatable and are not necessarily the answer to reducing heart disease risk. If the fat is coming from monounsaturated and polyunsaturated sources, a higher fat diet can actually be as good for the heart as the very low fat fare. The Committee on Diet and Health of the National Research Council said this in so many words when they posed the question, "Is the very low fat theory correct?" From a review of the current literature, they concluded, "No." They went on to state, "Intake of total fat per se, independent of the relative content of the different types of fatty acids, is not associated with high blood cholesterol and coronary heart disease."<sup>45</sup> We now know that we can have a healthful diet that includes moderate levels of fat if we are using the best types of fat.

After the 1992 study of nuts and cholesterol, Dr. Sabate took the nut research a step further. Instead of using Seventh-day Adventists again, who are already on a better overall diet than most Americans, he now studied individuals on an average American diet. One half of the total group was placed on an average diet. The other half were fed an identical-looking diet with one major difference. Walnuts were blended up and added to various food items. Other sources of fat were decreased to keep the calorie and total fat levels the same in the two groups.

Eating walnuts daily had some amazing results. LDL cholesterol, the "bad cholesterol," dropped by .5 points. This represents a remarkable lowering of heart attack risk. For each percentage point drop in the bad cholesterol, there is a two to three percent drop in the heart attack rate. A .5 point drop in LDL translates into a 36 to 54 percent drop in heart disease risk. The benefits of walnuts may not simply be due to their excellent Polyunsaturated/Saturated ratio. These nuts are also high in so-called omega-3 fatty acids, which have some special benefits.

Some saturated fats are extremely bad while others are not very difficult for the body to deal with. Similarly, not all foods that are high in polyunsaturated fats provide equal heart benefit. Margarine is an example of such a food.

## Margarine

Margarines were first thought to be beneficial because they had a higher polyunsaturated fat content than butter. Most margarines, however, are not natural products. These popular spreads are typically made from vegetable oil, such as corn oil, which is heated under pressure to partially hydrogenate (saturate) it so that it becomes a spreadable, solid fat at room temperature.

The hydrogenation process alters some of the

fat in the vegetable oil by changing the microscopic shape of the fat molecules. Normally fatty acids (the building blocks of fat) are found in nature in what is called the cis form, which refers to the molecules' three dimensional appearance. The hydrogenation process changes some of these molecules into the trans form. Trans fatty acids, unlike their cis counterparts, significantly raise the serum cholesterol and LDL, even though they are polyunsaturated. This rise in cholesterol correlates with the effect of margarine on heart disease risk measured in an eight year Harvard University study. Trans fatty acids have also been implicated in causing cancer.

All of these facts suggest that it would be better to spread a little nut butter, such as almond butter on our bread than margarine or butter. Another option would be to replace margarine on our bread with olive oil. This oil could be brushed on the bread. In a study of margarine users who consented to replace margarine on their bread by olive oil, there was a distinct rise in HDL levels and also a favourable slight decrease in LDL.

## Fat Substitutes

People are always trying to find ways to avoid changing their eating habits. Food manufacturers are well aware of this element of human nature and are ready to profit from it. Currently, food companies are testing various fat substitutes. Some have suggested that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) seems very willing to approve fat substitutes that may ultimately prove harmful. A case in point is the FDA-approved fat substitute called Olestra. Not only can Olestra cause diarrhea and soiled underwear, but even more concerning are studies demonstrating that eating Olestra decreases one's absorption of fat-soluble vitamins. Thus, less vitamin A, D, E and K will be absorbed. Furthermore, prolonged use of Olestra appears able to deplete the body's stores of vitamin E. It can also disastrously interact with medications such as Coumadin. Other fat substitutes are being studied. Not one that I am aware of has a completely safe track record. Fat-free substitutes are not the answer for a truly health-conscious individual who does not want to trade the risk of one health problem for another.

For nearly 20 years, conventional health education in America did not go beyond considering the effect of dietary cholesterol and fats on blood cholesterol levels. Dietitians would rightly talk about cholesterol and saturated fat in the diet while neglecting a number of other important dietary factors. Fortunately, however, we are now seeing a growing appreciation among health professionals for other dietary factors that can influence heart disease risk. **Some of the hottest areas are fibre, oxidized cholesterol, and antioxidant vitamins.**

NEXT NEWSLETTER - Heart Disease, fibre, antioxidants and oxidised cholesterol

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## Recipes

### **HOLIDAY ALMOND ROAST**

½ cup almonds  
½ cup sunflower seeds  
½ cup cooked soybeans  
½ - ¾ cup hot water  
1 cup wholemeal breadcrumbs  
½ cup chopped celery  
1 diced capsicum  
1 cup chopped onions  
1 cup rolled oats  
1 cup tomato puree  
1 tsp sea salt  
1 tsp marjoram

Whiz the almonds, then the sunflower seeds in a dry food processor until finely ground. Blend the soybeans in the hot water until smooth. Mix these with the remaining ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Let the mixture stand for a few mins, press into a lined loaf tin and then bake at 200° for 50-60 mins. This slices well, freezes successfully, and is ideal for sandwich fillings.

### **RED CABBAGE**

1 small red cabbage, shredded  
2 green apples, peeled and diced  
1 cup water  
2-3 tbsps lemon juice

Place cabbage and apples in saucepan and cook together with water and sea salt to taste. Simmer for about ½ hour. Add lemon juice and if desired, add a teaspoon of honey before serving. Serve with new potatoes.

## Poly-carbonate bottles

As most readers are aware of the need to drink adequate water each day, we need to consider how we carry this water. Do we carry our water supply around in a plastic bottle? If so, what is it made of? Are all these bottles safe to use?

Dangerous bacteria and potentially toxic plastic compounds have been found in the types of water bottles that are typically reused in homes, classrooms and workplaces across the country.

A study in a Canadian elementary school found that the bacteria found in children's bottles would have prompted health officials to declare that the water needed to be boiled, had the samples come from a tap. Researcher Cathy Ryan, a University of Calgary professor, discovered bacterial contamination in about a third of the samples collected from kid's water bottles at the school. The bacteria came from the drinkers hands and mouths over time as they repeatedly used the same bottles without washing them or allowing them to dry. The problem is worse among children who are notorious for not washing their hands after using the toilet.

Washing the bottles would appear to be the solution, however this poses another health risk. Washing the bottles accelerates breakdown of the plastic, potentially causing chemicals to leach into the water. Single-use bottles, commonly made of a plastic called polyethylene terephthalate (PET) which, while considered safe for single serving, will break down over time.

It has been discovered that frequent washing breaks down the plastic, and toxic chemicals can migrate into the liquid. One of the toxins is DEHA, a carcinogen.

The solution is to buy bottles that can be reused and can be washed with warm soapy water using a bottle brush.

These **Poly-carbonate** 1 litre bottles are available from Big W (camping section), Aussie Disposals and other camping stores. They are designed for hikers. I have found another outlet that sell them - these have a smaller opening and lid and sell for \$6.95 + postage per bottle. Ph 07 5449 0600 direct for supplies.

Scientists now say one of the world's most effective anti-pain medications is also the cheapest on earth. Pure Water! Eye-opening studies show that simple dehydration is one of the biggest causes of chronic back pain - your spongy spinal discs literally dry out. This is special danger for older people, who may only get thirsty after they are clinically dehydrated.

don't miss this opportunity to attend  
these very interesting meetings

FREE ADMISSION



with Barbara O'Neill

a one day Health Seminar  
comprising of 3 meetings

# Natural Health Meetings

**Back to Eden** is bringing Barbara O'Neill to the Albury area to speak in a Natural Health Seminar for one day only. Barbara has a profound insight into Natural Health and is well known as the Health Director of Misty Mountain Health Retreat, a Naturopath and Nutritionist. She has worked in the area of natural health for 15 years and has raised eight children. Her experiences are vast and her knowledge is incredible, but she presents them with a practicality that will amaze you. She also fits into her busy schedule speaking appointments that have taken her as far as teaching in schools in New York and Fiji, to meetings in Los Angeles, Wisconsin, Holland, Africa, New Zealand, Cook Islands, as well as all over Australia. She will weave into her talks some of her many experiences.

**When:** Saturday 6th May

**Times:** 9.30 am.....The Frontal Lobe.....the crown of the brain  
11.00 am.....The Mental Laws that Govern the Mind  
2.30 pm.....The Physical Laws that Govern the Mind

**Where:** Lavington Public School Hall  
Hague Street Lavington

**Cost:** Entry free

for those who book in before May 2nd,  
a light vegetarian luncheon will be provided free  
Phone to book for this **Beat 02 6025 3584**  
**Kaye 02 6025 5018**

This special Seminar is sponsored by **Back to Eden** and donations towards the costs will be appreciated.