

Cholesterol - Why is it dangerous

Cholesterol is a fat like substance that is produced by the liver and absorbed through foods.

However, when we have too much LDL cholesterol, it builds up on blood vessel walls and this is it's danger.

The role of LDL in stroke

Once LDL is deposited on the vessel wall, it forms an obstruction. The obstruction is then grown over by the blood vessel wall, which restricts the opening even further.

At this point a person may start to experience anything from weakness to breathlessness, depending on where the blockage is and how much of the blood vessel has been blocked off.

In the final scenario, the area ruptures - it is more prone to rupturing than normal vessel walls - the normal blood clotting develops to seal the leak, but due to the narrowness of the blood vessel at that point, the healing clot cuts the blood supply off.

You now have the stroke, which can take out your eyes or limb or a foot, or even take your life.

Nasty, nasty, nasty.

Our newer understanding of cholesterol

Cholesterol, however, is essential for bodily function, for transferring the energy from food to the cells in our body.

Like everything else, it seems, too much of a good thing is also harmful. The same can be said for cholesterol.

Cholesterol is actually made in several different forms - HDL and LDL mainly. HDL has traditionally be viewed as the good cholesterol that we can never have too much of, while LDL has been seen as the bad cholesterol we want to reduce as much as possible. LDL cholesterol deposits itself out of the blood stream and onto vessel walls.

All things equal, the higher the blood LDL cholesterol, the more likely the LDL will be deposited, the more likely cardiovascular disease will be.

All fine and dandy, but the research is now showing a different perception. It is becoming obvious that too much of HDL can kill you, just as too much of LDL can kill you.

The important research that brought our traditional understanding of cholesterol to it's knees, was one funded by a drug company. The company had created a new drug to specifically increase HDL cholesterol, which it did remarkably well.

The problem was, the humans taking this marvellous new drug were dropping dead in much greater numbers than expected, even if they had been left untreated. It was clear that increasing HDL too far, would also cause stroke and heart attack.

Other researchers had also found that decreasing LDL by drugs did not always lead to lower cardiovascular risk. Sure they found they could lower LDL remarkably well, but the remaining LDL still continued to build up on blood vessel walls.

The solution for cholesterol induced cardiovascular disease

Diet and exercise, though, have been found to be the main line of defense against LDL and HDL - High HDL is very rare.

Combined with drugs and or herbs when needed, still appears the best line of defense against cardiovascular disease caused by cholesterol, at least that's still what the research continues to support.

About the Author

Donald Urquhart is the editor and writer for a [cholesterol](#) information web site, where you can find out more on [LDL](#) and [HDL](#) cholesterol, as well as learn all about the importance of diet and exercise.

