

## American Heart Month

According to the CDC, heart disease is the leading cause of death and a major cause of disability in the US. About every 25 seconds, an American will have a coronary event, and about one every minute will die from one.

In honor of American Heart Health month, we'll be featuring tips for keeping your heart healthy naturally throughout February. Starting with...

### Cholesterol

We see everywhere in the media and we hear from our doctors that we need to lower our cholesterol to prevent heart disease. They push that our diets should be low in fat and cholesterol and if our cholesterol levels are high we should be on medication. But is this all true?

The first studies used to claim high cholesterol as a risk for heart disease actually says men with cholesterol *over 350 have a slightly higher risk*. Those with levels under 350 have very low risk. And yet now the American Heart Association says cholesterol should be under 200. In reality, everyone is a little different. Some will have naturally higher cholesterol, some lower. When we do look at our cholesterol number for information, we should be looking at the ratio of HDL to LDL, not the total number.

There is also little to no evidence that dietary cholesterol contributes to heart disease. In fact, cultures that eat foods higher in saturated fat and cholesterol actually have much less heart disease. There is quite a bit of evidence that *low cholesterol* can cause many problems, including higher risks of some cancers, erectile dysfunction and infertility, depression, memory loss, and heart arrhythmias.

Cholesterol *plays many important roles* in our bodies: it's necessary in all cell membranes, is a repair substance, many hormones are composed of it, is vital to the brain and nervous system, is a precursor to vitamin D, is a powerful antioxidant, and helps fight infection.

Do your own research. Check out *The Cholesterol Myths* by Dr. Ravnskov. Search the web for the truth. Stop in and talk to us about it more.