

# Terry Talks Nutrition



## Stop – Or Reverse – Heart Disease, Naturally

of for conventional cardiologists. How have my patients achieved such spectacular results? It is **not** through the regular use of synthetic drugs—it is through a judicious blending of mainstream and natural medicine practices.

**Why I think the prescription drug approach is wrong.** As a naturopathic cardiologist I have a unique perspective on the treatment of heart disease. I firmly believe that the reason that, despite billions of dollars in annual sales, prescription drugs are failing to stop or reverse heart disease is because they are used to treat a *theory* of heart disease (the risk of elevated LDL cholesterol levels) - rather than an actual underlying *cause*. The root of all disease is **oxidation and inflammation**. That is what I treat in my practice, and that is why my patients stay out of the system (avoiding by-pass and angioplasty). If we want to get serious about eliminating a preventable disease we need to stop focusing on theories such as LDL cholesterol reduction and focus on what we know are the underlying causes of disease: oxidation and inflammation.

Did you know that at the same time that sales for statin drugs (used to lower cholesterol) have increased to over \$20 billion dollars annually, hospitalizations for congestive heart failure have *tripled*? Did you know that almost half a million Americans are diagnosed with congestive heart failure every year, and half of them will be dead in less than 5 years? Statistically, this is faster than cancer! In my opinion, **the greater the increase in statin drug use, the more Americans that will die of heart failure.** Trading heart attacks for heart failure may be acceptable in the conventional system, but this is not how I want to treat my patients.

**Why don't I think these drugs work?** In my opinion, they don't address the real problems – oxidation and inflammation. A spoiled fish is not the same as fresh fish. Your body needs healthy LDL (the fresh fish) for many body functions. What you want to stop is the **oxidation** of LDL cholesterol (the rancid fish) which is the cause of the disease process. In the presence of inflammation, the disease process begun by oxidated LDL accelerates. Why don't all patients with elevated (oxidized) cholesterol get heart disease? Because they don't have inflammation! Inflammation sets off a process which drives the oxidized LDL cholesterol into the arteries. This is "plaque formation." These plaques can fill up the artery, blocking blood flow, or rupture, causing a heart attack or stroke.

### Treat the Cause, Not the Symptom

When I see patients who have **symptoms** of heart disease, I immediately begin a program to address the **cause** using antioxidant and anti-inflammatory natural medicines. One of my favorite

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### Key Words


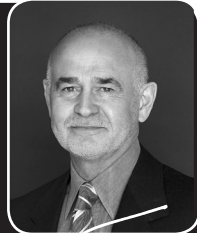
cholesterol, blood pressure, hypertension, amla, green tea, resveratrol, omega-3 fatty acids, heart disease, cardiovascular disease, atherosclerosis, CAD, coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure

From Terry: This week I'm very pleased to have Decker Weiss, NMD, FASA, here to share his thoughts on the natural treatment of heart disease. Dr. Weiss is a consulting physician at the Arizona Heart Hospital, and maintains a busy practice in Scottsdale, Arizona. We are very fortunate to have him here today to discuss the role of natural antioxidant and anti-inflammatory medications in the treatment and prevention of heart disease. Thank you so much, Dr. Weiss, for this very informative article.



Dr. Decker Weiss, NMD, FASA

In over 13 years of clinical practice as a naturopathic cardiologist, treating thousands of people, I have had zero patients who developed congestive heart failure. I have had one patient experience a stroke, and two patients experience a heart attack. These statistics are unheard

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natural treatments is Indian gooseberry, or amla. This fresh fruit from India has been an important part of Ayurvedic medicine for thousands of years. Modern research has unlocked the reasons for its success in treating heart disease. Amla is an antioxidant – it can stop the oxidation of LDL cholesterol, the first step in heart disease. It is also able to increase levels of the good, protective cholesterol, HDL. In a human clinical trial, use of amla was associated with a 21% decrease in LDL cholesterol, and a whopping 14% increase in HDL cholesterol levels. While theories on reducing LDL cholesterol are debated, the benefits of raising HDL are not. For every 1% increase in HDL levels, your risk of heart disease is reduced by 2-3%, so this finding is extremely significant.

Another excellent natural intervention that I use in my clinical practice is curcumin. This compound, found in the spice turmeric, has both antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. In other words, it can address **both** of the root causes of heart disease! In one clinical study, patients taking curcumin had a 29% increase in HDL cholesterol levels. I like to combine curcumin with other natural antioxidants, such as resveratrol and green tea. New research has found that curcumin and resveratrol act *synergistically*. That is, together they have more powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activity than when used alone. These antiox-

idant/anti-inflammatory ingredients help stop plaque formation, reduce the oxidation of LDL cholesterol and can keep inflammation in the arteries to a minimum.

Last, but certainly not least, I put all of my patients on omega-3 fatty acid supplementation. These omega-3s, from a clean fish source, such as salmon, slow the formation of plaque, reduce inflammation, make blood “slippery” and may even reduce the effects of aging. Healthy fat is an important part of the diet and necessary for good health. But I want to make sure that my patients make good choices. I encourage them to eat fatty ocean fish several times a week. But I know that it is sometimes a struggle to get enough omega-3 fatty acids in the diet. That is why I recommend a good, clean (pure and free of heavy metal contamination) omega fatty acid supplement daily. The key to any supplemental omega-3 is that it is a good quality and not rancid. Rancidity causes the very problems – oxidation and inflammation – that we’re trying to prevent. I have found that omega-3s that are bound to phospholipids instead of fish oils, in which the omega-3s are bound to triglycerides, have superior absorption and impact.

### Stop – Or Reverse – Heart Disease

In the 1900s, people died from infectious diseases. Today, we are dying from inflammatory diseases such as heart disease and cancer. The sad irony is that, in my opinion, this **doesn't have to happen**. Natural medicine has safe, natural antioxidants and anti-inflammatory interventions that can stop, or even reverse, heart disease. And these

benefits aren't just for the heart. Oxidation and inflammation are behind many of our modern chronic illnesses. These natural medicines can also help prevent cancer, autoimmune diseases, allergies, dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and more. I look forward to many more years of helping my patients avoid, or reverse, heart disease with the use of natural supplements like amla, curcumin, resveratrol, green tea and omega fatty acids. Why wait another day in starting your journey back to optimal heart health?

### Dr. Weiss recommends these two formulas.

#### Amla Formula:

Indian Gooseberry  
(*Embllica officianalis*) 500 mg  
Fruit Extract standardized to contain > 30% polyphenol content with emblicanins > 20%.

#### Curcumin – Green Tea and Resveratrol Formula:

Proprietary Blend 412 mg  
Curcumin CRX 791 (BCM-95®)  
Micronized (*Curcuma longa*) Rhizome Extract, phospholipids, turmeric essential oils, Green Tea (*Camellia sinensis*) standardized to contain >95% polyphenols, 75% catechins, and 40% EGCG (no caffeine), Resveratrol (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) standardized to contain 8% total resveratrols.

*When in doubt, always consult your physician or health care practitioner. This column is to provide you with information to maintain your health.*