INTRODUCTION

Chronic disease affects half of all Americans and accounts for 84 percent of our $3.8 trillion health care bill. This would be depressing except for one simple fact: Most of these chronic illnesses are lifestyle-related diseases. That means they’re preventable, treatable and often even reversible through changes in lifestyle factors like diet, exercise, and stress.

More specifically, the food we eat (or don’t eat) is the single biggest driver of chronic illness—everything from heart disease to diabetes, cancer to dementia, arthritis to autoimmunity, and more.

Simply put, food can cause disease, but it also can cure disease.

That’s what the Padillas learned when they did The 10-Day Detox Diet (which they continued for 40 days) and moved on to The Blood Sugar Solution. After seven days Daniel Padilla was out of pain after suffering for 15 years on 15 different medications. After 40 days he was off his meds and felt amazing. And after one year he and his wife, Rebecca, had lost over 160 pounds.

Daniel didn’t need one diet for his rheumatoid arthritis, another for his high blood pressure, and yet another for his migraines. He simply needed real food—anti-inflammatory food, detoxifying food, blood-sugar-balancing food, in other words, The 10-Day Detox Diet.

A Pill for Every Ill

As a doctor trained in conventional medicine, I was taught there is a pill for every ill, which is how someone like Daniel ends up on 15 different medications. But those meds didn’t make him better. He was still sick and had what I call “F.L.C. syndrome”—that’s when you Feel Like Crap! Daniel didn’t believe food was related to how he felt, and no doctor ever suggested that food could play a role in any of his 15 different chronic diseases. But he was desperate and tried The 10-Day Detox Diet.

The beauty of the human body is that if you take out the bad stuff and put in the good stuff, the body heals. And it doesn’t take long—often just 10 days. And if you are really sick, you can continue. Then in 40 days most chronic problems will dramatically improve or go away entirely.

Why I Created This E-Book Series

That is why I have created this series of E-books—to create a simple road map for using food as medicine. The science behind it is derived from the emerging view that food is not just calories but information—instructions that control your gene expression, hormones, immune system, and brain chemistry and provide the raw materials to build every cell of your body. The food you eat even determines which gut bacteria flourish in your digestive tract—good guys or bad guys. Each bite is literally controlling every function of your body.
Again, food is not just calories.

Food is information.

The 10-Day Detox Diet is scientifically designed to reverse most chronic disease by eliminating all non-food substances that send messages of disease to your body. This way of eating is designed to eliminate cravings and food addiction and be low glycemic, anti-inflammatory, gut healing, brain boosting, and blood-sugar balancing.

It is based on the science of Functional Medicine, which addresses the root causes of illness, not just the symptoms. In other words, functional medicine treats the whole organism—not just the organs.

Is There A Different Healing Diet for Each Disease?

The good news is that there is not a separate diet for preventing and reversing each of the hundreds of different chronic diseases. There is one basic healthy human diet that gets to the root of all illness.

And, yes, there are differences between people — some need more or less of this or that, or have unique needs, or have food sensitivities. But The 10-Day Detox Diet is a level setter — it will help you reboot and reset, and then you can make adjustments to find out what is perfect for you.

One Diet, Many Diseases

This is one of a series of seven e-books on how to use The 10-Day Detox Diet to address autoimmunity, diabetes, high cholesterol, hypertension, irritable bowel syndrome, migraines, and premenstrual syndrome. But the good news is that if you have ANY chronic illness, The 10-Day Detox Diet can have profound benefits.

A Few Days Away from Health and Happiness

And it doesn’t take long. You are just a few days away from health and happiness. This approach won’t work for everyone, or work all the time, but for the 80 percent or more of people suffering with chronic disease that is caused by what they are eating — or more importantly, what they are not eating — this approach will provide dramatic and quick benefits.

Try it for 10 days. If you are not better, try it for 40 days. And if you are still not better, it is time to see a Functional Medicine doctor to help you get to deeper roots such as chronic infections, environmental toxins, parasites and more.

Now let’s review how this approach can help cholesterol.
CHOLESTEROL: THE PROBLEM

Even though most people don’t realize it, fat does not cause your blood cholesterol to go up. It’s sugar or anything that turns to sugar in your body like flour and other refined carbohydrates. When you eat sugar – particularly fructose or high-fructose corn syrup – it causes the cholesterol-producing factory in your liver to turn on.

In fact, consumption of high-fructose corn syrup, which is present in sodas, many juices, and most processed foods, is the primary nutritional cause of most of the cholesterol issues we doctors see in our patients.

Simply put, if you have high triglycerides, low HDL, or high total cholesterol, getting off flour and sugar becomes the best way to fix the problem.

Despite what we’ve been brainwashed to think, fat isn’t the problem. Studies show that eating more fat can actually fix your cholesterol by increasing the good kind and lowering the bad kind.

Avocados, nuts, seeds, olive oil and fish oil all reduce your risk of heart disease and improve your cholesterol. And yes, even eggs and the saturated fat from coconut oil or butter are healthy. New studies reviewing all the research on fat and heart disease found no link, even with saturated fat. The only truly bad fat is trans fats.

So, eat more quality fat like nuts, avocados, seeds, and coconut butter. And eat good-quality protein with every meal. Both are very helpful in balancing your blood sugar, balancing your insulin, shutting off the fat-production factory in your liver, and making your cholesterol normal.

I don’t recommend a low-fat diet for my patients. In fact, I have them increase the fat in their diet! But I also advise them to dramatically decrease the amount of sugar and flour they eat.

Why Cholesterol Is Necessary for Health

Cholesterol is not the enemy. Your body needs cholesterol to make hormones, cell membranes, and brain cells. Without enough cholesterol, your testosterone levels would drop and your sex drive and function would plummet. Your cell membranes, which are made of cholesterol, couldn’t function properly. Your body would no longer be able to make CoQ10 – an important nutrient that is blocked by cholesterol medications – which could lead to neurological problems.

It’s not about having lower cholesterol; it’s about having the right type of cholesterol – big, fluffy particles instead of small, dense ones. Years of clinical work seeing thousands of patients and reading the research has led me to design a new “drug” to improve your cholesterol particle size so you have more of the big, buoyant harmless type.

What’s the drug? FOOD. You can even get it at your local “farmacy” — your grocery store.
Food should be our medicine and our medicine should be our food. When you fix your food, you fix your cholesterol. *The 10-Day Detox Diet* will fix it, and quickly! One patient had his cholesterol drop 100 points and his triglycerides drop 300 points in just 10 days.

**Is Your Cholesterol Rancid?**

Cholesterol isn’t the problem. It’s oxidized cholesterol, which is a rancid fat, that creates trouble. Oxidation occurs when oxygen interacts with substances to create a chain reaction to cause damage. Imagine rancid oil, an apple turning brown in the air, skin wrinkling from sun exposure, or your car rusting.

Rancid or oxidized cholesterol results from oxidative stress and free radicals, which trigger a vicious cycle of inflammation and fat or plaque deposition under the artery walls. The real danger occurs when LDL particles become oxidized and start the buildup of plaque or cholesterol deposits in your arteries. That’s why it is important to regularly eat a rainbow color of fruits and vegetables full of antioxidants.

**Is Your Cholesterol Small and Dense or Big and Fluffy?**

The key to understanding whether cholesterol creates a problem is to get the *right* type of cholesterol test. You see, 99 percent of doctors don’t do the right test. Most doctors are stuck doing outdated 20th-century testing.

The 21st-century test measures not just your cholesterol by weight (mg/dl), but also the number of particles that make up that number and the size of those particles.

I’m more interested in the quality of those particles. Are they light, fluffy, soft harmless beach balls or are they dense, destructive, golf balls?

Those small, dense cholesterol particles cause heart disease. They bang around in your arteries and cause damage, as opposed to large, fluffy beach ball-like ones that just bounce off and don’t cause a problem. Some people may even have high cholesterol with a healthy profile of fluffy beach balls.

In *The 10-Day Detox Diet: Cholesterol Solution*, you will learn exactly what type of cholesterol test you should have and other key tests to determine your real risk of heart disease.

**Lowering Cholesterol can be Harmful to Your Health**

The countries where people have higher cholesterol tend to have lower rates of heart disease and the lowest risk of death. So why are we putting people on cholesterol-lowering medications like statins? The truth is studies show that cholesterol medication works only for those people who have already had a heart attack. Statins *don’t* work for the 75 percent of people who’ve never had a heart attack, which is most of the people taking the drug!

Unfortunately, doctors often prescribe medications like statins to keep cholesterol levels low. But these drugs can introduce a whole host of problems including muscle damage,
brain damage, memory issues, Parkinson’s-like symptoms, and muscle aches and pains. All of this for medications which don’t necessarily even work.

In fact, a study in *The New England Journal of Medicine* showed even if your bad (LDL) cholesterol was below 70, and if your good cholesterol or HDL was low, the statin drugs don’t protect you. Low HDL comes from eating too much sugar and refined carbs.

That’s obvious if you know the real cause of heart disease, which is sugar and not fat. Sugar drives the good cholesterol down, increases the number of small and dangerous cholesterol particles, and causes pre-diabetes and diabetes — diabesity. THAT is the true cause of most heart attacks, NOT LDL cholesterol.

So why don’t you hear more about this? Because no good drug exists to raise HDL except high doses of the vitamin niacin, which can cause flushing and other side effects. The flushing is a benign side effect that can be prevented with baby aspirin and subsides as your body gets used to it. Doctors are trained to focus on the statins, which lower LDL, and billions of dollars are spent advertising them even though they are the wrong treatment.

If you’re like most patients I see, you’re convinced that cholesterol is the evil that causes heart disease. You monitor your cholesterol levels and avoid the foods that are purported to increase cholesterol and believe that you’ll be safe from America’s number-one killer.

Why are you afraid of cholesterol? Because for years, well-meaning doctors, echoed by the media, have emphasized what they long believed is the intimate link between cholesterol and heart disease.

Would that it were so simple! But the truth, not surprisingly, is much more complex. Cholesterol is only one factor —and not even the most important one — that contributes to your heart disease risk.

Let’s look at what cholesterol actually is: a fatty substance, produced by the liver, which is used to help perform thousands of bodily functions. The body uses it to help build our cell membranes, the covering of our nerve sheaths, and much of our brain. It’s a key building block for our hormone production, and without it we would not be able to maintain adequate levels of testosterone, estrogen, progesterone and cortisol.

Think cholesterol is the enemy? Think again. Without cholesterol, you would die.

In fact, those with the lowest cholesterol throughout the aging process are at highest risk of death. Higher cholesterol can actually, under certain circumstances, help to increase life span.

When I convey this simple reality to my patients, they often gasp.

**What Really Causes Cardiovascular Disease?**

Now that we’ve explored when and how cholesterol becomes more problematic, let’s take a look at other factors which play a more significant role in cardiovascular disease.
INFLAMMATION

Inflammation is the main cause of heart disease, and it is what makes cholesterol dangerous. Inflammation can arise from a poor diet, a sedentary lifestyle, stress, autoimmune disease, food allergies, hidden infections such as gum disease, or even toxins such as mercury.

A major study done at Harvard found that people with high levels of C-reactive protein (or CRP, a marker of inflammation) had higher risks of heart disease than people with high cholesterol. Normal cholesterol levels were not protective to those with high CRP. The risks were greatest for those with high levels of both CRP and cholesterol.

SUGAR

The biggest cause of inflammation and heart disease is diabesity — the spectrum of pre-diabetes to Type 2 diabetes that now affects 50 percent of all Americans (although 90 percent are not diagnosed by their doctors).

Diabesity — which is driven by the 152 pounds of sugar and 146 pounds of flour consumed each year on average by Americans — is the reason for bad cholesterol. Diabesity decreases good cholesterol and increases both your triglycerides and the number of small dangerous LDL particles, which further increases inflammation and oxidative stress.

HOMOCYSTEINE

Many Americans are deficient in B vitamins, and up to one-third of us has a genetic variation that requires us to have a special form of folic acid called 5 methyl folate for our bodies to function properly. If you are deficient in folic acid, B6, or B12 you will have an increased level of a substance called homocysteine that increases your risk of heart disease and dementia. This can be easily addressed by adequate folic acid intake along with vitamins B6 and B12. But, again, these have to be in the right forms to work properly.

Lower Your Risk of Heart Disease – Without Drugs

Heart disease has very little to do with simply lowering cholesterol with statin drugs. Our current thinking about how to treat and prevent heart disease is at best misguided, and at worst harmful. We believe we are treating the causes of heart disease by lowering cholesterol, lowering blood pressure, and lowering blood sugar with medication. But the real question is what causes high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and high blood sugar in the first place. It is certainly not a medication deficiency!

If you say your genes are responsible, you are mostly wrong. It is the environment working on your genes that determines your risk. In other words, it is the way you eat, how much you exercise, how you deal with stress, and the effects of environmental toxins that are the


underlying causes of high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and high blood sugar. That is what determines your risk of heart disease, not a lack of medication.

The research clearly shows that changing how we live is a much more powerful intervention for preventing heart disease than any medication. The “EPIC” study published in the Archives of Internal Medicine studied 23,000 people’s adherence to four simple behaviors (not smoking, exercising 3.5 hours a week, eating a healthy diet, and maintaining a healthy weight [BMI <30]). By adhering to these behaviors, 93 percent of diabetes, 81 percent of heart attacks, 50 percent of strokes, and 36 percent of all cancers were prevented.3

And the INTERHEART study, published in The Lancet in 2004, followed 30,000 people and found that changing lifestyle could prevent at least 90 percent of all heart disease.4

These studies are part of a large evidence base documenting how lifestyle intervention is often more effective in reducing cardiovascular disease, hypertension, heart failure, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and deaths from all chronic causes than almost any other medical intervention.5

Why? Because lifestyle doesn’t only reduce risk factors such as high blood pressure, blood sugar, or cholesterol. Our lifestyle and environment influence the fundamental causes and biological mechanisms leading to disease: changes in gene expression, which modulate inflammation, oxidative stress, and metabolic dysfunction. Those are the real reasons we are sick.

Disregarding the underlying causes and treating only risk factors is a bit like mopping up the floor around an overflowing sink instead of turning off the faucet, which is why medications usually have to be taken for a lifetime. When the underlying lifestyle causes are addressed, patients often are able to stop taking medication and avoid surgery (under their doctor’s supervision, of course).

The good news is that most things that create chronic disease are under your control, including diet, nutritional status, stress levels, and activity levels.

There are some simple tests to identify your risks and simple strategies to dramatically lower your risk of heart disease — and all of it can be done using The 10-Day Detox Diet: Cholesterol Solution.

CHOLESTEROL: THE SOLUTION

What to Test: Cholesterol and Heart Disease Risk

Knowing the cholesterol numbers is not as critical as knowing the following:

- Your levels of HDL “good” cholesterol vs. LDL “bad” cholesterol
- Your triglyceride levels
- Your ratio of triglycerides to HDL
- Your ratio of total cholesterol to HDL
- Whether you have small, dense cholesterol particles [these act like BBs, easily penetrating the arteries] or large, fluffy cholesterol particles [these are like big beach balls that bounce off the arteries, causing no harm — even if your total cholesterol is high]

If you want to test your overall risk, you can consider asking your doctor to undertake the following tests:

1. **Total cholesterol, HDL, LDL cholesterol, triglycerides.** Your total cholesterol should be under 200. Your triglycerides should be under 100. Your HDL should be over 60. Your LDL should be ideally under 80. Your ratio of total cholesterol to HDL should be less than 3.0. Your ratio of triglycerides to HDL should be no greater than 4; it can indicate insulin resistance if elevated.

2. **NMR Lipid Profile,** which looks at your cholesterol under an MRI to measure the size of the particles and determine your risk by assessing whether or not you have large or small particles. This is a very important test and a critical factor to track — as your system improves, your cholesterol can transform from being small, dense, and dangerous to being light, fluffy, and innocuous.

3. **Cardio C-reactive protein.** This is a marker of inflammation in the body that is essential to understand in the context of overall risk. The C-reactive protein level should be less than 1.

4. **Homocysteine.** Your homocysteine measures your folate status and should be between 6 and 8.

5. **Lipid peroxides or TBARS** test looks at the amount of oxidized or rancid fat — it indicates whether or not you have oxidized cholesterol. This should be within normal limits of the test.

6. **Fibrinogen** looks at clotting in the blood. It should be less than 300.
7. **Lipoprotein (a)** should also be looked at—it’s a factor often in men that can promote the risk of heart disease and should be less than 30.

8. **Genes or SNPs** may also be useful in terms of assessing your situation. We now know how to modify our diet and lifestyle according to our genes. A number of key genes regulate cholesterol and metabolism, including Apo E genes, and the cholesterol ester transfer protein gene. The MTHFR gene, which regulates homocysteine, is also important and may be part of an overall workup.

9. If you are concerned that you have cardiovascular disease, a **high-speed CT** (or EBT) scan of the heart may be helpful to assess overall plaque burden and calcium score. A score over 100 is a concern, and over 400 indicates severe risk of cardiovascular disease.

**What to Eat**

**General Dietary Recommendations to Help Prevent Cardiovascular Disease**

So, how do you get the right type of cholesterol? How do you lower your triglycerides and raise the level of good—and necessary—cholesterol in your body?

The first step in preventing heart disease is to eat a healthy diet. Increase your consumption of whole foods rich in phytonutrients, plant molecules that give your body the nutrients it needs.

Here are some very practical tips you’ll see in *The 10-Day Detox Diet* and your new cookbook. I find them very beneficial, and often, I see people getting better cholesterol results off medication than on medication.

1. **Eat protein with every meal**, even at breakfast, to avoid the blood sugar imbalances that increase your risk for heart disease. This will help you to avoid sudden increases in your blood sugar.

2. **Use clean animal protein** like low-mercury fish, organic turkey or chicken, grass-fed beef or lamb, and plenty of vegetable protein such as nuts, seeds, tofu and tempeh.

3. **Combine protein, fat, and carbohydrates** in every meal. Never eat carbohydrates alone.

4. **Avoid white flour and sugar**. In fact avoid even whole-wheat flour which is not much better. Any flour, even wheat free, raises blood sugar and triggers fat and cholesterol production in the liver.
5. **Eat high-fiber foods**, ideally at least 50 grams per day. Vegetables, nuts, seeds, and fruit all contain beneficial fiber.

6. **Avoid all processed junk food**, including sodas, juices, and diet drinks, which impact sugar and lipid metabolism. Liquid sugar calories are the biggest contributors to obesity and diabetes and heart disease. This includes sweetened teas and coffees and sports and energy drinks.

7. **Increase omega-3 fatty acids** by eating cold-water wild salmon, sardines, herring, flaxseeds, and even seaweed.

8. **Eliminate all hydrogenated fat or trans fat** which is found in margarine, shortening, and processed oils, as well as many baked goods and processed foods.

9. **Instead use healthy oils**, such as olive (especially extra-virgin olive oil), cold-pressed sesame, and other nut oils. Avoid commercially produced vegetable and seed oils which contain toxins and inflammatory omega-6 fats.

10. **Avoid or reduce alcohol**, which can increase triglycerides and fat in the liver and create blood sugar imbalances.

11. **Don’t allow yourself to get hungry**. Graze — don’t gorge — by eating every three to four hours to keep your insulin and blood sugar normal.

12. **Try not to eat three to four hours before bed**.

13. **Have a good protein-based breakfast every day**. You can start with a protein shake or eat eggs (omega-3 eggs are ideal).

14. **Include flaxseeds** by using two to four tablespoons of ground flaxseeds every day in your food. This can lower cholesterol by 18 percent. Flax is tasty in shakes or sprinkled on salads or cereal.

15. **Drink green tea**, which can help lower cholesterol.

16. **Use soy foods** such as tempeh and tofu, which can help lower cholesterol by 10 percent.

17. **Eat at least 8 to 10 servings of colorful fruits and vegetables every day**, which contain disease-fighting vitamins, minerals, fiber, phytonutrients, antioxidants, and anti-inflammatory molecules.\(^6\)

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The 10-DAY DETOX DIET MEAL PLAN

Below is your step-by-step meal plan. All recipes can be found in The 10-Day Detox Diet Cookbook.

DAY 1

BREAKFAST: Blueberry-Nut Smoothie (pg. 65)
LUNCH: Greek Salad with Spanish Mackerel (pg. 95)
SNACKS: ¼ cup almonds, 1 Deviled Egg (pg. 274) with fresh vegetables
DINNER: Braised Chicken with Onions and Peppers (pg. 173) and Mashed Cauliflower with Horseradish (pg. 265)

DAY 2

BREAKFAST: Turkey Sausage Patties (pg. 79) with a side of scrambled or poached eggs
LUNCH: Almond Chicken Salad (pg. 105)
SNACKS: ¼ cup walnuts, Cucumber-Kale Smoothie (pg. 272)
DINNER: Broccoli Tofu (pg. 131) with Zucchini Ribbons with Pearl Onions and Cardamom (pg. 268)

DAY 3

BREAKFAST: Cocoa-Almond Smoothie (pg. 69)
LUNCH: Waldorf Salad with Smoked Paprika (pg. 110)
SNACKS: ¼ cup cashews, Roasted Vegetables with Artichoke Hummus (pg. 278)
DINNER: Chili-Spiced Turkey Meatloaf with Roasted Carrot Salad (pg. 210)

DAY 4

BREAKFAST: Turkey Sausage Patties (pg. 79)
LUNCH: Dr. Hyman’s Super Salad Bar (pg. 85)
SNACKS: ¼ cup almonds, Stuffed Campari Tomatoes (pg. 276)
DINNER: Asian-Style Beef Stew (pg. 221) with Cauliflower “Rice” (pg. 264)
DAY 5

BREAKFAST: Strawberry-Almond-Coconut Smoothie (pg. 64)
LUNCH: Salmon Salad Wraps (pg. 102)
SNACKS: ¼ cup pecans, Egg Salad in Endive Spears (pg. 275)
DINNER: Roasted Turkey with Herb Paste (pg. 212) and Swiss Chard with Pine Nuts and Scallions (pg. 256)

DAY 6

BREAKFAST: Asparagus and Mushroom Frittata with Tomato Coulis (pg. 75)
LUNCH: Thai Tofu and Avocado Salad with Chile-Lime Dressing (pg. 90)
SNACKS: ¼ cup hazelnuts, Sardine-Cucumber Bites (pg. 280)
DINNER: Chipotle Salmon with Arugula Salad (pg. 160)

DAY 7

BREAKFAST: Poached Eggs over Spinach with Braised Artichoke Bottoms (pg. 80)
LUNCH: Tandoori Lettuce Cups with Cumin Sauce (pg. 112)
SNACKS: ¼ cup pumpkin seeds, Creamy Herbed Tahini Dip (pg. 281) with vegetables
DINNER: Roasted Vegetable Lasagna with Cashew “Ricotta” (pg. 133) and Wilted Mizuna with Walnuts (pg. 257)

DAY 8

BREAKFAST: Creamy Berry Smoothie (pg. 67)
LUNCH: Leftover Tandoori Lettuce Cups
SNACKS: ¼ cup walnuts, Spicy Roasted Pepper and Walnut Dip (pg. 282)
DINNER: Pacific Coast Bouillabaisse (pg. 137) with Arugula and Fennel Salad (pg. 252)
DAY 9

BREAKFAST: Almond-Berry Smoothie (pg. 68)
LUNCH: Dr. Hyman’s Super Salad Bar (pg. 85)
SNACKS: ¼ cup sunflower seeds, Bell Pepper Mini Quiches (pg. 277)
DINNER: Moroccan Chicken and Vegetable Stew (pg. 175) with Cauliflower “Rice” (pg. 264)

DAY 10

BREAKFAST: Açaí Smoothie (pg. 66)
LUNCH: Cherry Tomato and Tofu Salad (pg. 89)
SNACKS: ¼ cup pine nuts, Baba Ghanoush (pg. 283) with vegetables
DINNER: Slow-Cooked Brisket with Fennel and Onions (pg. 219) and Swiss Chard with Pine Nuts and Scallions (pg. 256)

What to Buy: The 10-DAY DETOX SHOPPING LIST

Below is a list of all the ingredients you will need for The 10-Day Detox Diet. And remember, no legumes, no grains and no starchy veggies!

FRUITS and VEGETABLES

Choose organic, seasonal, local produce whenever possible. (Sometimes organic fruits and vegetables are best purchased frozen during winter months.)

FRUITS:
- Açaí puree—frozen
- Blackberries — frozen
- Blueberries—frozen
- Kiwis
- Lemons
- Limes
- Orange (for the peel)
- Raspberries — frozen
- Strawberries — frozen
- Additional fresh berries of your choice

VEGETABLES:

You can eat an unlimited amount of non-starchy vegetables, such as these:
- Anaheim peppers
- Artichoke hearts—frozen
- Arugula or mizuna
o Asparagus
o Avocados
o Bean sprouts
o Bell peppers — red, other colors
o Bok choy
o Broccoli
o Broccoli rabe
o Brussels sprouts
o Cabbage — Napa, white
o Carrots
o Cauliflower
o Celery
o Chives
o Cucumber
o Eggplant
o Endive
o Fennel bulbs
o Garlic
o Ginger root
o Green beans or French-style haricots verts
o Horseradish
o Jalapeno peppers
o Jicama
o Kale — Lacinato, other varieties
o Leeks
o Lemongrass
o Lettuce — Bibb, Romaine hearts
o Mustard greens

o Onions — red, yellow, Vidalia
o Radish
o Scallions
o Sea Vegetables (wakame, kombu, etc.)
o Shallots
o Spinach
o Sugar snap peas
o Summer squash — yellow
o Swiss chard
o Tomato — cherry, grape, larger slicing varieties
o Zucchini
o Additional vegetables of choice for snacks, to dip and for Dr. Hyman’s Super Salad Bar

**Great Resources:** Cascadian Farm, Earthbound Farm, Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Miracle Noodle, Stahlbush Island Farms.

**PROTEINS**

**POULTRY AND EGGS:**

Look for organic, grass- or range-fed, antibiotic- and hormone-free poultry and eggs.

o Chicken: Boneless thighs and/or drumsticks, boneless breasts
o Turkey: Ground lean meat, ground dark meat, thin cutlets
o Eggs: Omega-3 eggs or organic farm eggs

**Great Resources:** Applegate Farms, Peaceful Pastures, Whole Foods Market, local farmers’ markets
**SEAFOOD:**

Look for small, wild or sustainably raised, low-mercury, cold water fish.

- Clams, scallops, snapper, wild-caught cod, wild-caught salmon fillets, anchovy fillets in oil, sardines in oil

**Great Resources:** Crown Prince Natural, Ecofish, SeaBear, Vital Choice Seafood

**RED MEAT:**

Look for organic, grass- or range-fed, antibiotic- and hormone-free; limit intake to 4 to 6 ounces, once or twice a week.

- Beef: Ground, flank steak
- Lamb: Lamb shanks
- Bison: Rib-eye steaks

**Great Resources:** Applegate Farms, Eatwild.org, Peaceful Pastures

**PROTEIN POWDER:**

Look for plant-based, unsweetened powders without fillers or additives.

- Unsweetened hemp protein powder

**FATS**

**OILS**

Choose expeller or cold-pressed and unrefined oils.

- Coconut, sesame, and grapeseed oils for high-heat cooking
- Extra-virgin olive oil, avocado oil for low-heat cooking

**Great resources:** Artisana Foods, Barlean’s Organic Oils, Spectrum Naturals

**NUTS/SEEDS, NUT/SEED BUTTERS, AND NUT FLOURS**

Preferably raw; avoid nuts that are cooked in oil or fried.

- Nuts: Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, pecans, pine nuts, walnuts
- Seeds: Chia, flax, pumpkin, sesame, sunflower
- Nut/Seed Butters: Almond butter, coconut butter, tahini
- Nut flours: Almond flour, coconut flour
Great resources: Artisana Foods, Barlean’s Organic Oils, Bob’s Red Mill, MaraNatha, Omega Nutrition, Once Again Nut Butter, Spectrum Naturals

NON-DAIRY MILK:
  o Unsweetened almond milk
  o Coconut milk - lite, full-fat (canned)
  o Unsweetened hemp milk (optional)

Great resources: Pacific

SEASONINGS, HERBS, AND SPICES

Choose from any of the following to enhance your recipes and taste experience (and watch out for added chemicals, sugars, MSG, and hidden sources of gluten or dairy):

SEASONINGS & CONDIMENTS:
  o Apple-cider vinegar
  o Balsamic vinegar
  o Mustard — Dijon
  o Tamari (choose low-sodium, gluten-free)
  o White vinegar
  o Miso — (choose white miso, gluten-free)

HERBS (FRESH, IF INDICATED):
  o Basil — fresh
  o Bay leaf — dried
  o Chervil — fresh
  o Chives — fresh
  o Cilantro — fresh

  o Dill — fresh
  o Mint — fresh
  o Oregano — fresh, dried
  o Parsley — fresh
  o Rosemary — dried (optional)
  o Sage — dried
  o Tarragon — fresh
  o Thyme — fresh, dried

SPICES:
  o Aleppo pepper (optional)
  o Allspice — ground
  o Anise (optional)
  o Black pepper — whole peppercorns, freshly ground
  o Cacao, raw powder
  o Cayenne pepper
  o Chili powder — mild
  o Cinnamon
  o Cloves — ground
  o Coriander
  o Cumin — ground, whole seeds
  o Fennel seed
  o Ginger powder
  o Mustard seeds
  o Nutmeg — whole spice
  o Paprika
  o Red pepper flakes
Great Resources: Flavorganics, Frontier Natural Products Co-Op, Penzeys Spices, Rapunzel Pure Organics, Seeds of Change, Simply Organic, The Spice Hunter

OTHER PANTRY ITEMS

- Saffron
- Sea salt
- Turmeric
- Capers
- Olives — Kalamata, mixed (unpitted)
- Water chestnuts, canned
- Low-sodium chicken stock
- Low-sodium fish/seafood stock
- Low-sodium vegetable stock
- Kelp noodles
- Anchovy paste
- Salsa (optional)
- Vegenaise (optional)

What to Take: Supplements

Supplements are important. Along with a healthy diet and exercise program, they can dramatically affect your risk of cardiovascular disease. Here are the supplements I have found most useful in my practice to lower cholesterol and even prevent and reverse heart disease.

I have sourced the highest-quality supplements that are tested for purity and potency and are all absorbable and free of contaminants and allergens. You can get these all online at store.drhyman.com.

The Cholesterol Support Kit (For people who are overweight or have blood-sugar issues)

It includes:

- PureLean Pure Pack by Pure Encapsulations (One packet a day with food)
- Vitamin D3 1000 IU by Pure Encapsulations (Two capsules twice a day)
- PGX Singles by Natural Factors (One packet in cold water just before meals). Fiber supplements such as PGX can both lower cholesterol and balance blood sugar metabolism.
Additional cholesterol support:

- OmegaGenics EPA-DHA 720 fish oil by Metagenics fish oil (Two soft gels twice a day with food). More may be necessary for those with low HDL and high triglycerides.
- Choleast 600 mg by Thorne (Two capsules twice a day). Red rice yeast is another powerful cholesterol-optimizing herbal formula.
- Meta-Sitosterol 2.0 by Metagenics (One to two tablets twice a day) Plant sterols (beta-sitosterol and others) can help improve cholesterol.

There are other suggestions and therapies, but these will work for most people. Working with a doctor specializing in nutritional therapy can help sort out questions or difficulties that arise.

**What to Do: Other lifestyle factors**

**Exercise**

I encourage 30 to 45 minutes of cardiovascular exercise at least six times a week.

You may try interval training (a good example is “wind sprints,” which are described in *The Blood Sugar Solution*) if you are feeling stronger. I also encourage strength training to build muscle and reduce body fat composition.

Exercise is not a luxury. It’s a necessity when it comes to preventing almost all chronic disease, from heart disease to cancer, from dementia to diabetes, from osteoporosis to osteoarthritis. You cannot age successfully without it. It is simply how we are designed.

**Reduce Stress**

Stress alone can cause many chronic diseases. Take a heart attack. Stress often triggers a cascade of events that cause a heart attack by creating inflammation, causing high blood pressure, and even making your blood more likely to clot.

Finding ways to manage stress and to relax is essential for dealing with nearly all chronic health conditions, including cardiovascular disease.

Learn to reduce stress by doing regular relaxation exercises such as yoga, tai chi, meditation, breathing, guided imagery, or whatever it takes to engage the relaxation nervous system, which can lower your inflammation and blood sugar levels as well as increase metabolism and help with your overall health.

Try classes, buy CDs (you can try my UltraCalm audio program), try therapy, or just go out and have fun. Do whatever it takes to hit the pause button on a daily basis and maintain your health.
Sleep

I used to think that "MD" stood for "medical deity" and meant I didn’t have to follow the same sleep rules as every other human being. I stayed up late working long shifts in the emergency room, ignoring the demands of my body. It wasn’t until I learned that shift work leads to a shortened life expectancy that I quit.

Unfortunately, our lives are infiltrated with constant stimuli that keep us revved up until the moment we go to bed. It’s no wonder so many of us have trouble getting restful sleep.

Instead of pushing through until your head hits the pillow, try to take a little “holiday” in the two hours before bed. Create a sleep ritual—a special set of little things you do before bed—in order to guide your body into a deep, healing sleep.

Here are some tips on how to restore your natural sleep rhythm. It may take weeks or months, but using these tools in a coordinated way will eventually reset your biological rhythms:

- **Practice the regular rhythms of sleep.** Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
- **Use your bed for sleep and romance only,** not for television or even reading.
- **Create an aesthetic environment that encourages sleep.** Use serene and restful colors and eliminate clutter and distraction.
- **Create total darkness and quiet.** Consider using eyeshades and earplugs.
- **Avoid caffeine.**
- **Avoid alcohol.** It may help you get to sleep initially, but it causes interruptions throughout the night, resulting in poor-quality sleep.
- **Get at least 20 minutes exposure to daylight daily.** The light from the sun enters your eyes and triggers your brain to release specific chemicals and hormones like melatonin that are vital to healthy sleep, mood, and aging.
- **Eat no later than three hours before bed.** Eating a heavy meal prior to bed will lead to a bad night’s sleep.
- **Don’t exercise vigorously after dinner.** It excites the body and makes it more difficult to get to sleep.
- **Write your worries down.** One hour before bed, write down the things that are causing you anxiety and make your to-do list for the next day to reduce your worry. It will free up your mind and energy to move into deep and restful sleep.
- **Take a hot salt/soda aromatherapy bath.** Raising your body temperature before bed helps to induce sleep. A hot bath also relaxes your muscles and reduces tension physically and psychologically. By adding 1 to 1 1/2 cups Epsom salt (magnesium sulfate) and 1 to 1 1/2 cups baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) to your bath, you will gain the benefits of magnesium absorbed through your skin and the alkaline-balancing effects of the baking soda, both of which help with sleep.

- **Get a massage or stretch before bed.** This helps relax the body, making it easier to fall asleep.

- **Warm your middle.** This raises your core temperature and helps trigger the proper chemistry for sleep. A hot-water bottle, heating pad — or a warm body — can do the trick.

- **Avoid medications that interfere with sleep.** These include sedatives [which are used to treat insomnia, but ultimately lead to dependence and disruption of normal sleep rhythms], antihistamines, stimulants, cold medication, steroids, and headache medication that contains caffeine.

- **Use herbal therapies.** Try 200 mg of passionflower, or 320 mg to 480 mg of valerian root extract standardized to 0.2 percent valerenic acid one hour before bed.

- **Take 200 mg to 400 mg of magnesium citrate or glycinate before bed.** This relaxes the nervous system and muscles.

- **Other supplements and herbs can be helpful in getting some shut eye.** Try calcium, theanine (an amino acid from green tea), GABA, 5-HTP, melatonin, and magnolia. (I like a product called Kavinase UltraPM that has a form of GABA, and 5-HTP all in one. It works well for many of my patients.)

- **Try 1 mg to 3 mg of melatonin at night,** which can help stabilize your sleep rhythms.

- **Get a relaxation, meditation or guided imagery CD.** Any of these may help you get to sleep.

### When to Use Medications

Occasionally I will recommend cholesterol-lowering medications if I feel that my patient is swimming upstream genetically, or if there is significant heart disease present already. Then I can carefully weigh the risks and the benefits of medications.

However, it is possible to achieve or exceed the benefits of medications through lifestyle. Dr. David Jenkins from the University of Toronto compared treatment with statin drugs,
which are the number-one cholesterol medication, to a diet high in viscous fiber, almonds, soy, and plant sterols and found they were equal, although the diet was more effective in lowering inflammation and homocysteine.⁷

In fact, many of my patients have lowered their cholesterol over 100 points by following the comprehensive program I outline in this e-book.

In the rare occasions when I do need to use medications, here are the ones I prescribe:

**Statins**

These work by blocking the production of cholesterol in the liver. They can also lower inflammation and very high doses may even reverse plaque or fatty deposits in the arteries.

Though now widely prescribed, statin medications do have significant side effects in 10 to 15 percent of patients who take them. In fact, statins have now been linked to an increased risk of Type 2 diabetes. Statins also deplete the body’s stores of the vital nutrient called coenzyme Q10. If you’re on statins, it is very important to supplement with at least 100 mg of CoQ10 a day.

Many patients also have to stop taking statins because of muscle pain and aching, known as statin myopathy. It is more common than most people think.

And you must have your liver function checked regularly and have your muscle enzymes (CPK) measured to make sure you can continue the medications safely. However, you can have symptoms, including pain and muscle injury, without having an abnormal CPK test.

**Niacin**

Niacin is also known as vitamin B3, and in very high doses (1000 to 3000 mg a day) it can be very helpful for raising good cholesterol (HDL) and lowering high triglycerides—something at which statins are not very effective.

I use niacin often in my patients who have insulin resistance or pre-diabetes. The major side effect is flushing (sort of like hot flashes), which are benign, subside after an hour, and reduce completely over a few weeks. You can stop flushing by taking a baby aspirin (81 mg) half an hour before your take the niacin.

I usually recommend long-acting Niaspan and build up slowly over the course of two to six weeks to the desired dose of 1500 to 2000 mg daily. This must be done under a doctor’s supervision.

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**Ezetimbe (Zetia)**

Zetia prevents absorption of cholesterol from the intestine. However recent studies have shown that combining Zetia with a statin actually increases plaque in the arteries even though it lowers cholesterol. One more reason to banish the assumption that lowering cholesterol is what protects us against heart disease. Combining Zetia with a statin also increases the risk of liver toxicity.

**Fibrates**

This class of medications includes drugs such as fenofibrate (Tricor) and gemfibrozil (Lopid) and helps to lower triglycerides and raise HDL. These drugs also act on a newly discovered class of receptors that control inflammation and blood sugar called PPAR, which I talk about in *The Blood Sugar Solution*. The verdict is still out on their effectiveness and safety. I prefer to use niacin, which achieves the same results but at lower cost and with less risk.

**Bile Acid Binding Agents**

Drugs like Questran and WelChol bind up bile in the gut and promote the elimination of cholesterol from the body. Bile is comprised of cholesterol among other things, and getting rid of bile helps lower your cholesterol. These are somewhat difficult to take, however, and not often used.

Just remember that even the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology both recommend diet and lifestyle as the first line of treatment for improving cholesterol. Most of my patients never even need these meds. And they do have side effects. However, as noted, for some who have had heart attacks or have a genetic lipid disorder, medication can be helpful. But it is the exception rather than the rule. Be sure to do the right tests to check your cholesterol; try The 10-Day Detox Diet and other interventions that I recommend first. Then, if you still have problems, consult with your doctor to determine the best path forward. Most times, the real problem isn’t cholesterol, it’s inflammation. And this approach gets to the root of heart disease and cholesterol problems.
CONCLUSION

For the vast majority of people, a lifestyle-based approach is better than simply taking a cholesterol medication. We need to address the larger issue of metabolic syndrome to reducing the risk of heart disease, and that can ONLY be done effectively with a comprehensive diet and lifestyle approach like the one outlined above.

Remember, cholesterol is only one of many factors that lead to cardiovascular disease, and it may not even be the most important one. Inflammation and insulin resistance or pre-diabetes are much more important. There are many possible causes of cardiovascular disease, and we have to look at all of them. We focus on cholesterol because it is what we have the best medication for, but remember: If all you have is a hammer, then everything looks like a nail.

Comprehensive diet, supplements, exercise, and other lifestyle approaches can have a huge impact on your risk of heart disease and can dramatically improve cholesterol. The big bonus? This approach reduces your risk of nearly all chronic diseases.

Medications are available as a last resort, but I never start my patients on them without trying an integrated approach to cholesterol management and heart disease prevention. In fact, cholesterol comes way down as a side effect of changing lifestyle. You often don’t have to treat it directly.

If you are willing to tweak your diet and lifestyle and take a few supplements, your health may change dramatically—and so will your life.

If you have tried The 10-Day Detox Diet and are still not completely better and you have tried it for 40 days, then you should seek out a Functional Medicine practitioner. You can come see me, or one of my Functional Medicine doctors at The UltraWellness Center or at the Cleveland Clinic Center for Functional Medicine where we treat people from all over the world. You can also find a trained practitioner near you through the Institute for Functional Medicine.

The answers are right in front of you. Treat the underlying causes of your illness, and you will begin to experience vibrant health once more.