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4330 Wornall Road
 Suite 2000
 Kansas City, MO
 64111-9923

(816) 931-1883
 1-800-697-2272
 Fax (816) 931-7714

Website: www.cc-pc.com

- Barry D. Rutherford, M.D.
- Warren L. Johnson, Jr., M.D.
- Robert D. Conn, M.D.
- David M. Steinhaus, M.D.
- Lee V. Giorgi, M.D.
- Thomas H. Good, M.D.
- Timothy M. Bateman, M.D.
- James H. O'Keefe, Jr., M.D.
- Kenneth C. Huber, M.D.
- Steven B. Laster, M.D.
- John B. Hiebert, M.D.
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- Geoffrey O. Hartzler, M.D.
- Ben D. McCallister, M.D.
- David R. McConahay, M.D.

**Waste Not, Want Not:
 THE CYCLE (AND RECYCLE) OF LIFE**

By James H. O'Keefe, M.D.

I grew up in the '60s with practical parents who were children of the Great Depression. My father was the king of re-cycling before they had a name for it, when it was simply considered 'being thrifty.' Having his old shoes re-soled and reconditioned made Dad happier than buying a pair of new shoes. For more than 40



years, rather than waste gasoline driving, he walked the 2-mile round trip to and from work. He never threw a returnable can or bottle in the garbage, nor would he walk past one on the road without stopping to pick it up. My mother, who today remains as down-to-earth and practical as ever, used to scrub aluminum foil clean after cooking on it so she could reuse it again. Cotton diapers were washed and used time after time, growing softer for the wear. Their marriage was strong, their dreams focused, and their values rock solid. Most of their best friends lived in the neighborhood and they would get together daily for coffee in the mid-day or a

drink at happy hour. I can picture them now: Dad in Bermuda shorts, T-shirt and a Minnesota Twins baseball hat; Mom in a house dress, baby in one arm and dishtowel in the other.

It was an age during which broken things were fixed rather than trashed. The black-and-white television, the screen door, the hand-me-down clothes with patches over the knees and elbows—stuff was made 'almost good as new,' not just discarded and replaced. A single bath tub of water could get six children squeaky clean; even if the water going down the drain was pretty dirty by the time the last kid climbed out of the tub. Leftovers were reheated; soap and toilet paper were rationed.

'Waste not, want not' was the motto of a generation who had lived through times of scarcity and felt the quiet desperation of sometimes wanting for needs as basic as food and shelter. Their frugal ways at times drove me crazy—all that

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**PRACTICE REACHES
 AGREEMENT WITH
 BLUE CROSS NETWORKS**

Thanks to an outpouring of support from our patients who joined with Cardiovascular Consultants in insisting that quality of care should not be sacrificed for lower costs, the practice and Blue Cross networks have reached an agreement.

This agreement will allow our patients enrolled in Preferred Care, Preferred Care Blue and Freedom Network Select to continue to pay in-network rates for their care through Dec. 31, 2005.

However, long-term issues with regard to how "quality care" should be defined and measured are still unresolved. Over the next few months, Cardiovascular Consultants will work hard to find common ground with its insurance partners on this issue.

We anticipate that by the end of the summer we will be able to provide you with an update about whether we have been able to extend our relationship with the Blue Cross networks beyond Dec. 31, 2005. ♥

Waste Not

Continued from page 1

mending, reusing, sharing, and conserving—sometimes I just longed for the luxury of being wasteful. Waste implied prosperity; being able to discard things meant you were confident there would always be more.

Then my father died, and on that cold January night, I was hit with the anguish of understanding that sometimes there isn't any more. Sometimes, the possessions we care about most become used up and disappear...never to return.

So we need to love and care for the people and things in our world. Support them when they are weak, mend relationships when they are broken, heal wounds that still fester, and safeguard our blessings. Conserve and cherish them, hold them close to our hearts. This is the case for 'sometimes rocky' marriages and old cars, for kids with dreadful report cards, dogs with weak bladders and bad hips, and aging parents and grandparents. We keep them because they are worth it, and because they make our lives worth living.

Our planet too needs our love, respect, and nurturing. We are given the privilege of living in this paradise for one short lifetime. Yet the future of our children's children and the Earth itself depends upon us preserving our world so that we leave it as good as we found it when we inherited it from our ancestors.

The most important things in life can't be replaced, like the beauty and harmony of the nature; like a parent or a sibling, a child or a grandparent, a special pet, or a friend and classmate who might be half a continent away. These things bring meaning and pleasure to our lives; they make our existence precious. So we try to stay close even when we are separated by hundreds or thousands of miles. Family and good friends are kind of like the stars in the sky—although you can't always see them, they are always out there, shining in the darkness, helping us navigate the world, bringing warmth and light to our lives. ♥

The Survival of the Fittest

By James H. O'Keefe, M.D.

Natural selection is a cold and harsh process. Animals that become weak, slow, or sick become vulnerable to elimination. These individuals are usually the first to be culled from the herd by predators or harsh conditions. For most of the existence of the human race, physical fitness was not an option. The weakest and slowest members of the tribe were the most susceptible to predators, severe elements, and times of scarcity.

Today you do not have to worry about falling prey to wild carnivores, famine, or the elements. But even in highly civilized 21st century America, when you become weak, out of shape, or unfit you better 'watch your back'. Natural selection is still culling the herd, though it won't be lions or wolves nipping at your heels and dragging you down. The modern predators are heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis, diabetes, and many other forms of disease.

I really worry about my patients who become so weak that they can no longer perform their normal daily activities like climbing the stairs, doing housework or yard work. Sure, we have all seen examples of very fit and strong people who succumbed to a premature death from heart disease or cancer, but much more often disease strikes the weak and unfit individuals.

A study published recently in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that being out of shape (or unfit) was more dangerous than all of the other classic risk factors such as smoking, high blood pressure, and established heart disease. That trial showed that a person's exercise capacity, measured simply by how long they could walk on a treadmill, was a more powerful predictor of death than all other risk factors. It also showed that regardless of what risk factors you may have, when you become physically fit you decrease your risk of premature death by 50 percent.

Most of this benefit is realized by going from a completely sedentary lifestyle to being just moderately active. This means simply making a habit of taking the stairs rather than the elevator, taking your dog for a stroll one or two times a day, or doing vigorous housework can substantially reduce your risk of dying. The more fit you become, the lower the risk that you will fall prey to the modern scourges. For instance, studies show that people with significant plaques in the heart arteries can markedly reduce their risk of heart attack by walking or jogging 15 miles per week. The people who increase the distance to 20 or more miles weekly have an even lower risk of heart trouble.

In fact, exercise is a great way to prevent heart attack, stroke, and even some forms of malignancy like colon cancer. Studies show that being sedentary is linked to a host of serious health problems - from depression and diabetes to osteoporosis, dementia, and even sexual dysfunction. Yet almost 75 percent of adults in the United States are now considered unfit, and 65 percent are overweight or obese. I personally find this concept of natural selection a great motivational tool to 'train for life.' Our very survival may depend on our ability to stay strong and fit. In the meantime, exercise also keeps us lean, enthused and vigorous. ♥



Out of Synch? Atrial Fibrillation: Making Sense of Chaos

Are you troubled by the irregular and fast heart rate that goes along with atrial fibrillation? You are not alone. Atrial fibrillation (afib) is one of the most common problems we see in cardiology today. A recent study showed that about one in four Americans develops atrial fibrillation at sometime during his or her lifetime.

The heart rhythm originates in the atria—the two chambers that are located atop the pumping chambers (the ventricles). The atria act as holding chambers and booster pumps, contracting about one-fifth of a second before the ventricles do.

Atrial fibrillation occurs when the normally synchronized regular rhythm in the atria becomes chaotic, rapid, and irregular, causing the walls of the atria to essentially stand still or quiver, rather than contract effectively. This does not substantially interfere with the function of the main pumps of the heart, though it does predispose the person to other problems.

AFIB AND STROKE RISK

The heart rate in afib usually becomes irregular and often quite rapid. Even more problematic is a tendency to form blood clots in the 'nooks and crannies' of the atria during afib. This accounts for a five-fold increased risk of stroke for people who have atrial fibrillation, and at least one other risk factor such as being over age 60, or cardiovascular conditions including high blood pressure, valvular heart problems, congestive heart failure, diabetes or coronary disease. Younger people with perfectly normal hearts and normal blood pressure do not have an increased risk for stroke with atrial fibrillation.

This risk of stroke in afib can be largely eliminated with the use of warfarin (Coumadin). If you are on warfarin, it is important to keep a close eye on the INR (protime). We like to see the INR between 2.0 and 3.0 to prevent clots without predispos-

ing to excessive bleeding. The response to warfarin varies from one person to the next, so finding the dose right for you is a matter of monitoring the INR and adjusting the dose accordingly. Additionally, the type of diet you are eating, whether you have recently been taking antibiotics, and many other factors can affect your sensitivity to this drug.

Thus, it is very important for you to be closely monitored while you are on Coumadin. We generally have people check their INR/protime every two or three weeks to make sure they are within the desired range. If you are interested, we do have a Protime Clinic at Cardiovascular Consultants that offers this service.

NO RACING!

It is also important to keep your heart from racing when in atrial fibrillation. Drugs, including beta blockers (Metoprolol, Coreg, Toprol) and calcium blockers (diltiazem, verapamil) and digoxin are helpful for preventing rapid rates in atrial fibrillation. For many afib patients we suggest electrocardioversion—a procedure that uses a controlled electric current passed through the chest during brief anesthesia to restore normal sinus rhythm. There are many drugs as well to help keep you in sinus rhythm, such as amiodarone, flecainide, propafenone, and sotalol. These medications can have side effects and need to be monitored closely.

Several large, randomized, controlled trials have been performed in the past few years addressing the question of whether or not we should try hard to maintain a sinus rhythm (get you back in synch) or simply

settle for anticoagulation and rate control without resorting to the more problematic medications and recurrent shocks to the heart.

These studies show that either strategy results in similar long-term outcomes.

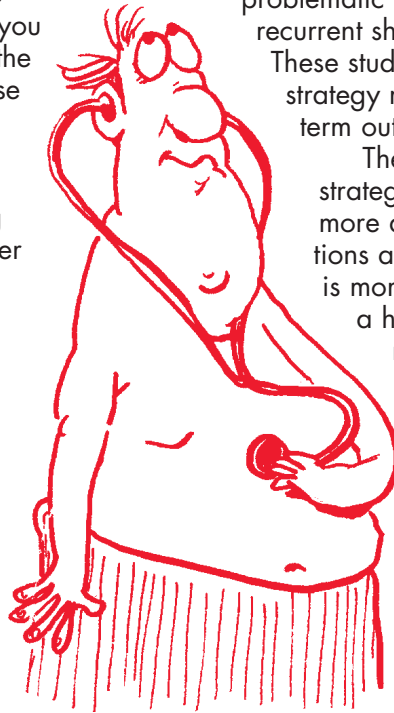
The rhythm control strategy (employing the more dangerous medications and repeated shocks) is more expensive and has a higher risk of adverse medication effects, as well as a trend towards lower survival than rate control alone. The two largest and best studies on this issue, the AFFIRM and the RACE trials, both found that maintaining effective anticoagulation with warfarin and rate

control were the most important issues for preventing problems in atrial fibrillation over the long term. Atrial fibrillation is a common and bothersome problem, but generally is not life threatening.

OPTIONS FOR TREATMENT

Because we do not have one simple and reliable solution for atrial fibrillation, there are many different options for treating this problem. Our treatment strategy focuses on the safest and most effective approach in each particular individual for minimizing the symptoms of afib and reducing risk of stroke.

One of the hot areas of research in atrial fibrillation currently involves radiofrequency ablation. This technique is being performed here at Cardiovascular Consultants by Drs. David Steinhaus and Brian Ramza. This procedure involves using advanced electrophysiologic techniques



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Quit Watching and Start Living: Turn the TV, DVD, and Computer OFF

By James H. O'Keefe, M.D.

"In the game of life, even seats on the 50 yard line don't interest me. I came to play".

H. Jackson Brown

At point A you are delivered into this wonderful world squinting and screaming and full of potential. At point B, you are history. What you do with those 30,000 (plus or minus a few thousand) days is up to you. You aren't going to live forever, though we sometimes get lulled into acting as though life were just a dress rehearsal.

Television is a black hole into which much of your precious time disappears. In many respects, your time is the most important commodity you have in life. Trust me, when you are on your deathbed someday you will not be saying, "If only I had watched more TV."

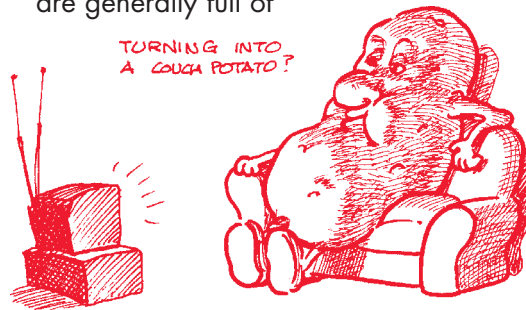
The major life regrets for most people turn out not to be the things they have done, but instead the things they haven't done—the dreams they never followed, the missed opportunities, the time they didn't spend with the people they loved. People who are well-read are often intelligent and are generally admired, but being "well viewed" won't do much for you except make you overweight and boring.

You burn more calories on an hourly basis sleeping than you do channel surfing with the remote. Television (like other passive screen-viewing activities) is a slippery slope that hypnotizes us into wasting a substantial proportion of our waking free time.

Television has become a major distraction from the real world and often intrudes upon our tranquility and inner peace. TV, movies, the computer and the internet create an artificial world that sets the stage for disappointment, as the real world is usually not as exciting or fast moving. The title of a book by Neal Postman—"Amusing Ourselves to Death,"

captures the downside of our excessive screen time. This national pastime has become an addiction fueled by the billions of dollars of marketing muscle.

TV now permeates nearly every segment of our lives including stores, airports, waiting rooms, emergency rooms, restaurants, bars, workout facilities and most rooms in our homes. Television news programs are generally full of



disturbing images of violence and crime. Although these stories and pictures are almost always irrelevant to your own life, they can cause undue emotional stress and leave you with a sense of fear and distrust.

You will get out of life what you put into it; TV requires nothing from you and gives you nothing in return. The things you do, people you meet, the places you go, the books you read and the adventures you experience will be the fuel that powers your personal growth. Investing your free time in television viewing is, for the most part, a one-way street to a bland and mind-numbing existence. Vicarious television shows displace real life with a 24/7 stream of images and fabricated stories. Rather than experiencing the lasting richness and fullness of real life, many Americans settle for sitting in front of a flickering screen as the time of their lives runs like fine sand through an hourglass.

Mr. Timothy Dumouchel threatened to sue a company that provided free cable for over four years despite multiple attempts to cancel the service. He explained, "I believe the reason I smoke and drink and my wife is overweight is because we

watched TV everyday for the last four years."

Your life is defined by the choices you make. Our patients often complain that they have no time for exercise and eating right, yet the average American watches about three to four hours of TV daily. A recent study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that your chances of being obese go up 23 percent for every two hours of TV viewing per day, and go down 24 percent for every one hour of exercise per day. The answer to your weight problem is as simple as turning off the TV and going outside to play.

Don't get me wrong. The TV is often on around the O'Keefe household, and occasionally we do sit down at the end of the day to watch it for a few minutes. Television is a great way to relax after a long day, and the internet will continue to revolutionize our lives for decades to come. It becomes a problem when TV or video games become the major way you spend your leisure time. Excess viewing is a vicious cycle whereby the more you watch, the more you weigh, the less energy you have and all the more sedentary you become.

If you want to be a person who makes things happen rather than one who sits around wondering what happened, cutting back on your viewing time is a great place to start.

My philosophy is to save TV and computer time for the day when my options are limited—when I am too sick or debilitated to go out and play, or to enjoy an evening out with Joan, or to climb a mountain and watch the clouds sail overhead. When I am forced to settle for a vicarious lifestyle of just watching, I will. Until then, I don't care if I ever see another television program. Life is short. Don't just watch it. Do it. ♥

"A ship is safe in the harbor, but that is not what ships are made for."

Study Shows Laughter Really May be Good Medicine

Researchers Michael Miller, M.D., and Robert Vogel, M.D., reported that watching a humorous movie had a healthy effect on blood vessel function allowing the arteries and veins to relax more effectively, thereby improving blood flow. This study, presented at the Scientific Sessions of the American College of Cardiology, adds to a growing body of science that suggests that laughter may be good medicine for the heart.

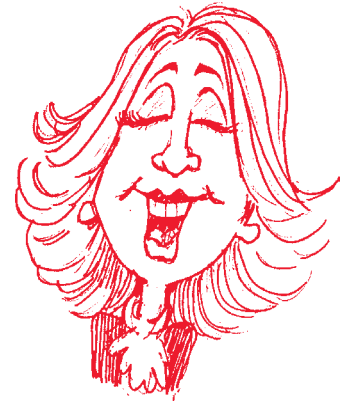
In contrast, watching a stressful movie appears to have the opposite effect—irritating the lining of the blood vessels, known as the endothelium, causing constriction of the arteries and restriction of blood flow.

Laughter, it appears, can be a beneficial exercise for maintaining healthy blood vessels and can offset the negative impact of mental stress. In the study researchers measured blood vessel function via ultrasound before and after watching two movies on the opposite ends of the emotional spectrum. On separate days the participants watched a 30-minute segment of either an intense D-Day combat scene from *Saving Private Ryan*, or a hilarious segment from the comedy *King Pin*. The study found that the two segments provoked dramatically different effects on blood vessel behavior.

Arterial blood flow was reduced in 70 percent of the volunteers after watching the stressful battle scene; while beneficial blood vessel effects and relaxation were noted in 90 percent of the volunteers after watching the funny segment. On average, the diameter of the arteries increased by 22 percent during laughter and decreased by 35 percent during mental stress.

The magnitude of change in the blood vessel diameter and flow was similar to that expected with a session of aerobic exercise. Dr. Miller suggested that 15 minutes of laughter on a daily basis is probably good for the vascular system. On the other hand, real life can be stressful enough; so I personally try to avoid upsetting movies like horror flicks and depressing movies.

Keep this in mind when you are choosing to watch television or a movie, surf the Web, or play a videogame. In some cases, such as a funny or uplifting show, the choice might actually be good for you. In others, the choice you make might do more than just waste time, it might actually be bad for your health. Choose wisely. ♥



Out of Synch?

Continued from page 3

that typically take four or five hours to localize regions in the atria where the afib rhythm disturbance arises. Small controlled burns are then placed in these sites to eliminate the sources of irritability.

Recent studies show that this is a promising technique, although much work needs to be done in perfecting it before it becomes widely available. The latest studies indicate that about 75 percent of people who have afib ablation have the rhythm problem cured. We are considering afib ablation as an option for some people in whom medications have failed. However, most patients are not candidates for this procedure yet.

PREVENTING AFIB

If you have atrial fibrillation, there are steps you can take to

reduce the likelihood that this problem will occur. Make sure your blood pressure is well controlled. Recent studies suggest that some blood pressure drugs, including ACE inhibitors and angiotensin receptor blockers, may be helpful in preventing recurrent atrial fibrillation.

Studies show that Omega-3 fats (fish oil) can be helpful for preventing or reducing recurrence of atrial fibrillation. The best study on this topic was just published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* in March 2005. In this trial, the people who were randomized to 1,700 mg. of Omega-3 per day prior to bypass surgery had a 54 percent lower risk of afib developing after surgery.

Regular exercise, keeping your weight down, avoiding excess caffeine and alcohol, making sure you get a good night's sleep, and trying to eliminate excess stress can all help to

make your heart less irritable.

Recent studies suggest that sleep apnea is commonly associated with atrial fibrillation. If you snore loudly, this may be predisposing you to low oxygen levels at night and triggering episodes of atrial fibrillation. Sleep apnea can also cause other problems like high blood pressure, ventricular rhythm abnormalities, and congestive heart failure, so it is important to treat this problem, if you have it.

To summarize, atrial fibrillation is an increasingly common cardiovascular problem. If you have this disorder, you need to talk to your cardiologist about options. The most important issues are to be sure that you are on anticoagulation medication, if you are a candidate for this, and to make sure that your heart rate is not more than 100 beats per minute when you are in afib. ♥

Ankle Swelling: A Nuisance of Gravity, or a Sign of Problems?

Left Leg Swelling More Common in Women

Swelling of the legs, ankles and feet, also called peripheral edema, is a common complaint. In most situations, this is more of a nuisance than a sign of a significant problem. However, one should be aware there are many potential causes that should be considered and excluded before considering it a benign condition.

Many are concerned peripheral edema may reflect "bad circulation." Circulation to the legs is carried by arteries, carrying oxygen-rich blood from the left side of the heart to the extremities. The veins then take the "used" oxygen-poor blood from the legs back to the right side of the heart which sends the blood to the lungs to become oxygen-rich again. Peripheral edema does not usually indicate poor circulation and is most commonly due to the veins taking blood from the legs back to the heart, rather than the arteries taking blood from the heart to the legs.

The walls of the arteries are more muscular and elastic whereas the veins are a more thin-walled structure and more prone to stress. Gravity itself can create a back pressure on veins which can cause swelling. Often one reports that swelling in the ankles is worse by the end of the day and resolved when getting out of bed the next morning. Simple elevation of the legs will reverse the effects of gravity and reduce swelling. If we walked around all day on our hands rather than our feet, we would notice swelling in our arms, wrists, hands and head!

Peripheral edema is especially common in women. The increase in blood volume associated with pregnancies, along with gravity, stretches the veins causing incompetency of the vein valves and their ability to propel blood back to the heart. This can become a chronic

problem following pregnancy. Commonly, swelling is noted in both legs. *However, in women, the left*



leg may be the only one involved or be more swollen than the right. This is felt to be related to increased

pressure from the pelvic organs as the main left lower extremity vein crosses over to join the right lower extremity vein, as together they form the inferior vena cava which is the main vein that carries blood back to the heart.

Varicose veins are another common cause of peripheral edema. Genetics play an important role here. One is most likely to also develop varicose veins if they were present in a parent. Swelling may worsen with prolonged standing and especially with prolonged sitting, as not only are the veins fighting gravity but are also being "pinched" at the knees and hips, which creates even more of a back pressure. Long car rides, plane trips and sitting at the computer are common culprits of peripheral edema. Warm temperatures, especially the hot summers in Kansas City, can make swelling worse.

Blood clots in the legs can obstruct blood flow in the veins. Your body finds other veins to get the blood back to the heart, but these usually aren't as efficient and can result in chronic swelling. Likewise, swelling can be present when the larger veins are taken from the legs for heart bypass surgery. Swelling also may be a sign of heart, liver, kidney or thyroid problems. If one has had a major illness or stress to the body, malnutrition which is associated with a low protein state may also cause edema. Medications, such as the family of calcium channel blockers which are often prescribed to treat high blood pressure, may commonly cause peripheral edema as well.

It is important to recognize the cause of peripheral edema and discuss this with your healthcare provider. The specific treatment will be directed at whatever underlying cause is found. Simple measures to treat edema are to avoid prolonged standing or sitting and elevate legs. Support stockings may be a challenge to put on, but do provide support to the thin-walled veins. Avoiding excess salt may reduce fluid retention and diuretics may be prescribed. Exercise and maintaining ideal body weight are also imperative! ♥

Tracy L. Stevens, M.D.

RECOMMENDED WEB SITES FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH IN WOMEN:

- ♥ SAINTLUKESHEALTHSYSTEM.ORG (WOMEN'S CARDIAC CENTER)
- ♥ WOMENHEART.ORG
- ♥ WWW.HEARTTRUTH.GOV
- ♥ WWW.AMERICANHEART.ORG



Why Whey Protein is Way Better for You!

By James H. O'Keefe, M.D.

Whey is one of the best sources for high quality protein. It is also among the most powerful anti-aging, fat-burning, disease-fighting foods you can eat. You need to make whey a staple in your diet if you want to lose your excess weight and rejuvenate your life. Without a doubt, protein is the best nutrient for producing the sensation of being full.

Protein also helps to build muscle and keep your metabolic furnace cranked up – giving you more energy and burning off more calories. This is why high-protein plans like the Atkins Diet and the South Beach Diet are usually successful in producing weight loss.

You are designed to thrive best on a diet rich in high-quality protein. But the protein our ancestors ate was lean, higher in Omega-3 fats, low in saturated fat, and devoid of dangerous chemicals like nitrites, industrial pollutants, synthetic hormones, herbicides, pesticides, and added salt. Furthermore, most of their protein was eaten raw. And while cooking meat and fish is great for killing microbes and parasites, (not to mention improving the flavor), the high temperatures can denature the proteins and produce dangerous carcinogens like heterocyclic amines.

Whey protein is a clean source of high-quality protein in a convenient form that is completely free of any of these contaminants or carcinogens. So while ample protein in your diet is as crucial to your long-term health and vigor today as it was 10,000 years ago, many of your protein sources today are not ideal. For example, too much fatty red meat can increase cardiac risk factors, and if the meat is charred and overdone, over the years it may increase the risk of cancer, as well.

Whey protein is a natural, safe, and good-tasting protein source that will give you the best of both worlds. If you use a "clean and pure" whey protein product you will get the benefits of a high-quality protein rich in branched chain amino acids that will help you to achieve your ideal body

weight, improve your immunity, boost your antioxidant anti-aging defenses, and keep you filled up. And you will also have a quick, easy, and tasty protein source that is free of toxic contaminants. Although whey is derived from milk, it is free of lactose and saturated fats, meaning you get the high-quality protein, without having to worry about the risks associated with dairy products.



THE BENEFITS OF WHEY

Whey protein confers eight distinct benefits that will help you re-capture the appearance and vitality of your youth.

1. The high level of cysteine, an essential amino acid, stimulates glutathione production by as much as 60 percent. This is one of the most potent endogenous (i.e. made naturally by your body) antioxidants. The increased glutathione levels help to bolster your immune system, and also neutralize the free radicals that promote aging, heart disease and cancer. Whey protein may lower the risk of prostate cancer, in particular.

2. Whey helps to build muscle. With each year that passes after age 30, you lose one-half to one pound of muscle. This is replaced by 1 to 2.5 pounds of fat per year. Whey protein builds muscle better than any other protein source because it is uniquely rich in all the essential amino acids. These amino acids, such as valine, leucine, and iso-leucine are needed to repair muscle tissue broken down by exercise or stress and replace old, dead or damaged cells with new ones. For each one pound of muscle you add to your body, you burn an additional 50 calories per day, even at rest.

3. Whey protein burns fat, especially inside your abdomen,

where it is the most unattractive and the most dangerous for your health. It does this by increasing your metabolism so you will burn more calories. Studies show that simply adding whey to a standard diet will help you lose body fat while maintaining muscle during weight loss.

4. Whey increases satiety, thereby lowering your daily intake of calories. Probably the single most important step in preventing aging and disease is to simply reduce calorie intake. You will find it difficult to not eat if you are hungry all the time; conversely it is easier to avoid the lure of junk food and excess calories if you aren't hungry. Whey will fill you up and keep you feeling full longer with fewer calories than any other food.

5. When substituted for other protein sources, whey reduces the load of toxic pro-aging and potentially carcinogenic substances. Whey is a pure and clean protein source that contains no toxic contaminants such as pesticides commonly found in meat and dairy, or nitrosamines found in processed luncheon-type meats.

6. Whey protein may reduce depression and emotional stress because it is high in tryptophan—an amino acid that improves mood and sleep quality in some individuals.

7. Whey improves blood pressure levels. Clinical studies show that whey protein isolate contains bioactive peptides that appear to lower blood pressure in people with mild hypertension.

8. The amino acids in whey protein are the exact building blocks your body needs to restore the youthful luster and fullness to your hair and give you smooth, shiny and strong nails. You may notice an improvement in the appearance and strength of your hair and nails when you use whey protein on a daily basis. Because whey also improves immunity and insulin resistance, it can be effective in preventing or improving toenail and fingernail fungal infections. ♥

FROM THE
HEART

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James H. O'Keefe, Jr., M.D.

Editor-In-Chief

4330 Wornall, Suite 2000

Kansas City, MO 64111

(816) 931-1883

330 Arkansas, Suite 202

Lawrence, KS 66044

(785) 841-3636

12300 Metcalf Ave., Suite 280

Overland Park, KS 66213

(913) 491-1000

5844 N.W. Barry Road, Suite 230

Kansas City, MO 64154

(816) 587-2500

Website: www.cc-pc.com

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How to Choose a High Quality Whey Product

When shopping for a whey product, look for 'whey protein isolate' which is a more highly purified form of whey. This will provide for quick and easy digestion of the essential amino acids needed by the body for healthy and strong muscles, skin, hair, and nails. These amino acids are especially important during times of stress, such as heavy exercise or recovery from injury.

Whey protein is best bought in large containers (2 to 5 pounds), since it needs to be consumed regularly to reap the health benefits. We suggest a dose of about 20 to 25 grams daily, which is usually about one scoop per day. The whey product should be less than 150 mg. of sodium per serving, and sugar-free. Look for a whey

powder with not more than a couple of other ingredients besides whey protein isolate. Many people prefer to have a sweetener in the whey powder to make it more palatable; we suggest using only those products with Splenda as the artificial sweetener.

CardioWhey is a new product in the CardioTabs™ line that is designed to help improve your body composition by burning off excess fat tissue, while at the same time keeping your muscles strong.

In addition to a highly purified whey protein, one scoop of CardioWhey contains 50 and 80 percent of the daily value of the minerals magnesium and chro-

mium. These minerals help to maintain cardiac health and keep insulin sensitivity normal. Abnormal insulin sensitivity is an underlying factor in a variety of conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and coronary disease.

A scoop of CardioWhey protein powder mixed in skimmed milk or water is a quick, easy and tasty way to start your day off right. Add in a handful of nuts, a piece or two of fresh produce and a cup of tea and/or water and you have an ideal meal or snack.

If you have abnormal kidney function, consult your doctor before considering taking a whey protein supplement.

Proceeds from CardioTabs™ are used to support research and education at Cardiovascular Consultants.

For more information on CardioWhey or to place an order, visit the CardioTabs™ Web site at www.cardiotabs.com. ♥

