Does sugar raise cholesterol? (Cardiologist) Transcript

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Why Cholesterol Needs a Root-Cause Look

Your cholesterol comes back high. The usual response by the cardiologist, eat less fat, likely take a statin drug. But who's asking how your cholesterol got there in the first place?

Asking questions like, what are you eating? How are sleeping? What's happening with your blood sugar? And most importantly, What is happening inside the blood vessels that we're really trying to protect?

Sugar consumption belongs in the conversation, but telling someone to eat less sugar is a sound bite. It's not a plan. My framework is simple. Too much bad stuff and not enough good stuff leads to all disease.

Things like too much processed food, environmental toxins, stress, artificial light at night, and non enough real food. Sunlight, sleep, movement and meaningful connections.

Those factors affect how your body performs and your cholesterol panel can reflect that. I'm cardiologist Dr. Jack Wolfson and I am going to go through four things you need to understand about sugar, cholesterol and most importantly getting to the root cause of cardiovascular disease.

First, I want you to know what happens when sugar becomes a daily habit.

How Sugar Affects Cholesterol and Triglycerides

Things like a soda with lunch, sweetening your coffee, packaged snacks, dessert before bedtime like everybody does. Your body has to process all of it.

Insulin helps manage that incoming energy and it also participates in regulating cholesterol production. One of the enzymes activated by insulin is called HMG-CoA reductase and that eventually makes cholesterol.

But the story goes beyond that enzyme. Excess added sugar, especially when it exceeds excess calories, can drive your liver to make more fat and release more triglyceride-rich particles into your bloodstream.

Over time, that can contribute to fatty liver, insulin resistance, higher trigrycerides, and changes in your cholesterol profile. Now that doesn't mean every carbohydrate is a problem.

A piece of whole fruit or a sweet potato is different from soda pop and ice cream. What it does also mean is that we need to start asking questions about what you're eating and how well your bodily body is handling it.

An abnormal result should start with an investigation. What is driving the change in your numbers? And what does your body actually need a function better?

Second, we to understand that cholesterol is part of a much bigger story. Your body needs cholesterol for cell membranes hormone production, digestion, brain function and everything else.

That's why the body makes it. And it doesn't mean that we need to ignore an elevated result.

Cholesterol in Context: Blood Sugar, Inflammation, and Vessel Health

It means we to interpret cholesterol in context. But I want to know about your blood sugar, insulin resistance, inflammation and oxidative stress and so much more.

I also want understand the health of your endothelium, the delicate lining of you blood vessels. Here's where my

root cause framework comes in. It's all about too much bad stuff and not enough good stuff, and how this disrupts the gut, impairs metabolic function, promotes inflammation and oxidative stress.

Those processes can damage the vessel lining and contribute to cardiovascular disease. Sugar can be one contributor, so can poor sleep, environmental toxins, chronic stress, processed foods.

The goal is a healthier person with healthier blood vessels. A cholesterol panel does give us some information, but it doesn't tell us what you need to know about your heart attack risk.

Third, give your body a better environment. Start by removing the obvious sources of added sugar, soda, sweetened drinks, candy, and the processed foods you eat out of just sheer habit.

Replace those foods with foods that actually nourishes you. wild seafood, pasture raised eggs and meat, vegetables, whole fruit, avocados, nuts and seeds.

If your afternoon snack is a candy bar, try a handful of nuts, maybe a couple dates. if breakfast is pastry and sweetened coffee, build your meal around eggs, and other real foods.

But don't stop at the plate, get outside in the morning, move throughout the day, prioritize sleep, reduce artificial light after sundown, preferably eliminate it, make time for people you care about.

Building a Better Heart Environment

This is eating well, living well thinking well. That's our 100 year heart method. You're removing the bad things that interfere with health and supplying your body with the good things it needs to work optimally.

Cutting sugar is one useful step within that bigger plan and now you understand why sugar belongs in the cholesterol conversation. You can also have changes that you can start making that are small.

But there's a question about cutting back on sugar that cannot be answered by itself. What else could be contributing to my risk? You don't want to spend months doing one thing right while overlooking the poor sleep, chronic stress, and other important factors that we've already mentioned.

You want your effort to be part of a plan to protect your heart. That's why I don' want this conversation to end with just eat less sugar. I want you to start looking at the bigger picture.

Our free Heart Attack Risk Quiz gives you a place to begin. It helps you consider possible drivers of oxidative stress, inflammation, and ultimately the things that lead to a heart attack so you can start asking better questions about your own heart health.

The quiz won't diagnose a Heart Condition. but it can help you recognize what you might be overlooking. We're going to stimulate some things you never thought about.

And when you understand what deserves attention, your next steps have a purpose. You're building a real plan around your health instead of wondering whether cutting out one more food is the answer.

we've all been there done that. So check the link in the description below about how to take our free heart attack risk quiz. So now let's get to number four.

How do you know whether your changes are helping? Well, what we do is here at Natural Heart Doctor, we call it test don't guess.

Testing Progress and Measuring Heart Risk

Before you make changes, understand your starting point, then document what you actually changed. Did you

eliminate the daily soda? Replace the processed snacks?

Did your improve your sleep, your physical activity, movement, mindset? That information helps us to interpret your follow-up results. Reducing added sugar may improve triglycerides and your blood sugar regulation.

That's true. LDL may respond differently depending on your starting point. LDL deserves a much more in-depth conversation. If you replace sugary snacks with foods high in saturated fat, for example, LDM may rise, but good quality LDl.

And we can see triglicerides improve. So all this deserves very thoughtful review. You look at the whole pattern. Look at markers of insulin and resistance like blood sugar, insulin, hemoglobin A1c.

Check the inflammation and oxidative stress markers that matter and look at the person attached to those results. How do you feel? How's your energy? how's you sleep?

or your happiness quotient? If something remains abnormal, keep investigating. This is called root cause cardiology. What is still interfering with your health and what can we do about it?

Sugar consumption is part of the cholesterol story, but root cause cardiology goes further. It's understanding what's driving potential disease. Remove the bad inputs, supply the body what it needs, then measure your response.

We call this the 100 year heart method. Eat well, live well. Think well test. Don't guess. That's the foundation. And that's how we work toward better cardiovascular health on your way to the one hundred year.

Heart.