The Heart-Kidney Link Your Doctors Never Connected Transcript

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Introduction to Free Radicals and Vitality

Your body is constantly producing molecules called free radicals as a byproduct of metabolism. Normally, your antioxidant systems neutralize these before they can do damage.

But when the production outpaces the neutralization from poor diet, toxin exposure, chronic stress, over-exercising without adequate recovery, these free radicals start attacking your blood vessel wall directly.

I'm Dr. Vesmair Phan, a physician on a mission to help you break free from symptom management and step into a life of thriving health. Together, we will uncover simple, powerful ways to prevent disease, restore energy and take control of your health naturally.

If you're ready to stop managing illness and start building vitality, you're in the right place. Your prescription for vitality starts now. Something happened recently that I can't stop thinking about.

I was looking at autopsy research, the kind of studies where scientists examine what's actually inside the arterial plaques of people who died from heart attacks.

And what they found, it wasn't what I expected. It wasn't what any of us were taught.

Rethinking Cholesterol and Plaque Formation

For decades, we all heard the same story. Cholesterol builds up on your artery walls like grease clogging a pipe. And eventually, it blocks blood flow.

That image is so ingrained in our medical culture that questioning it feels almost heretical. But when researchers actually cut into those plaques and examined them under microscopes, they didn't find cholesterol coating the artery walls.

What they found was clotting material. fibrin, platelets, inflammatory debris. The cholesterol crystals that were present, they came from red blood cells that had been trapped in those clots, not from the cholesterol circulating in the bloodstream.

This led me to ask a question that nagged at me for months. If cholesterol isn't the primary villain we made it out to be, then what is actually destroying people's hearts?

And more importantly, for what I see every day in my practice, what if the same thing, destroying hearts, is also destroying kidneys? Stay with me here because this is where something profound starts to emerge.

What if we have been looking at heart disease and kidney disease as separate problems, treating them with separate specialists, separate medications, separate protocols, when really they share the same underlying cause?

What if the wall between cardiology and nephrology is an artificial one and the real story is about what's happening to your blood vessels everywhere in your body?

Here's what grabbed my attention when I started investigating this connection. If you have chronic kidney disease, your risk of dying from a cardiovascular event, heart attack, stroke is up to 10 times higher than someone with healthy kidneys.

10 times? That's not a coincidence. That's a signal. That's your body trying to tell us something important about how these organs are connected.

Heart and Kidney Disease as One Vascular Problem

But here's what gets me. In conventional medicine, we have created this artificial separation. You see a cardiologist for your heart, you see a kidney doctor for your kidneys, and rarely do these specialists sit down together and ask the deeper question.

What's the root cause affecting both organs? Instead, we end up with patients on 5, 6 or even 7 different medications, each one targeting a symptom, while the underlying fire continues to burn.

And that's when I started to understand something that changed how I see this. Your kidneys and your heart aren't just neighbors in your body. They are intimate partners.

They are in constant communication through your bloodstream. When one struggles, the other compensates. When one fails, the other suffers. They share the same delicate blood vessel lining, the endothelium.

and they are both vulnerable to the same damaging forces. What the research is revealing is both simpler and more profound than I expected. It's not about a single villain like cholesterol.

It's about the health of your vascular system as a whole, the intricate network of blood vessels that feeds every organ in your body, and the forces that damage those vessels.

They affect your heart and your kidneys in remarkably similar ways. Let me walk you through what I have discovered about these forces. Because once you see them clearly, everything starts to make sense.

The first force is chronic inflammation. Think of it as a low-grade fire burning inside your blood vessels. This isn't the acute inflammation you feel when you sprain an ankle.

That's healthy. That's healing. This is a slow, persistent smoldering that never resolves. And it comes from multiple sources that most people never think about.

Processed oils in our food supply that weren't part of human diet until 1920s. Chronic infections hiding in our gums or sinuses. And overwhelmed gut-producing inflammatory signals.

And even chronic psychological stress that elevates cortisol day after day.

The Five Forces Damaging Blood Vessels

This constant inflammation damages the delicate endothelial lining of your blood vessels, both the ones feeding your heart and the microscopic ones filtering blood through your kidneys.

The second force is oxidative stress. Your body is constantly producing molecules called free radicals as a byproduct of metabolism. Normally, your antioxidant systems neutralize these before they can do damage.

But when the production outpaces the neutralization from poor diet, toxin exposure, chronic stress, over-exercising without adequate recovery, these free radicals start attacking your blood vessel wall directly.

They oxidize the cholesterol particles in your blood, making them sticky and inflammatory. They damage the kidneys' filtering units. They create a cascade of injury that the body struggles to repair.

The third force is something called endothelial dysfunction. That delicate inner lining of your blood vessels. The endothelium is supposed to produce nitric oxide which keeps your vessels relaxed and your blood flowing smoothly.

It's supposed to prevent inappropriate clotting. It's supposed to regulate blood pressure moment to moment. But when this lining is repeatedly damaged by inflammation and oxidative stress, it stops functioning properly.

Blood pressure becomes harder to control. Clotting becomes more likely. And the damage accumulates in your coronary arteries and in the tiny vessels of your kidneys simultaneously.

But here's where it gets really interesting. There is a fourth force that conventional medicine rarely tests for, abnormal clotting tendencies. Some people, due to genetics, due to certain conditions, due to elevated substances like lipoprotein A or fibrinogen, have blood that clots more easily than it should.

And when this combines with endothelial damage, you get what researchers are now recognising as the real mechanism of atherosclerosis. repeated small clots forming underneath the endothelial layer, building up over time.

Not cholesterol coating the walls, but clots accumulating from repeated injury and repair cycles gone wrong. This same process affects the kidneys' delicate filtering units, gradually reducing their function.

And the fifth force, one that ties many of these together, is metabolic dysfunction. particularly blood sugar dysregulation. When your blood sugar is consistently elevated, even in the pre-diabetic range, sugar molecules literally attach to proteins in your blood and blood vessel walls through a process called glycation.

These glycated proteins become stiff, dysfunctional and inflammatory. They damage both coronary arteries and kidney vessels through the exact same mechanism.

What I keep coming back to in this, these aren't five separate problems requiring five separate treatments. They are interconnected forces that often share common root causes.

And when you address those root causes, you can protect both organs simultaneously. One case in particular has stayed with me. A man in his early 60s came to see me with what seemed like two separate problems.

His kidney function was at 40% and declining, and he'd already had two stents placed in his coronary arteries. His cardiologist had him on a statin because his cholesterol was well controlled.

His kidney doctor was watching his numbers drop, essentially waiting for dialysis to become necessary. Two specialists, two sets of medications, nobody asking the deeper question.

When we ran more comprehensive testing, we found what I began to suspect. His oxidized LDL was extremely elevated, meaning massive oxidative stress damaging his vessels.

His inflammatory markers were high. His fibrinogen, a clotting factor, was elevated. And we found evidence of chronic low-grade infections driving systemic inflammation.

None of this was being addressed. The cholesterol number everyone was focused on, it looked perfect on paper.

A Patient Case: Reversing Vascular Damage

We took a different approach, one that addressed the root causes affecting both organs. We targeted the oxidative stress. We worked on reducing systemic inflammation through specific supplements.

We cleared the infections. We optimized his nutrition to support endothelial healing. No magic pills, just identifying what was actually driving the damage and addressing it systematically.

Within six months, his kidney function had improved to 52%, his energy returned, his blood pressure which had required three medications to control now needed only one, and his vascular inflammatory markers normalized.

We weren't treating his kidneys or his heart in isolation. We were treating the vascular system that serves both and the root causes that had been silently damaging it.

Now I want to be clear. Not everyone responds the same way. Results vary. Some people see dramatic

improvements. Others find more modest gains. That's the nature of personalized medicine.

But this case illustrates something important. When we stop treating organs in isolation and start asking what's driving damage at a systemic level, new possibilities open up.

So what does this mean practically? What can you do with this understanding? First, if you have kidney disease or heart disease or risk factors for either, ask for the right testing.

Don't just look at total cholesterol. Request oxidized LDL, which shows whether your cholesterol is being damaged by oxidative stress. Ask about lipoprotein A, which is a genetic marker for clotting risk that most doctors never check.

Look at fibrinogen, inflammatory markers like high-sensitive CRP and homocysteine. These markers tell you what's actually happening to your vascular system, not just whether you fit into a pharmaceutical protocol.

Testing and Lifestyle Steps to Protect Vessels

Second, address what's feeding the inflammation. Remove processed seed oils from your diet. Check labels on everything because soybean oil, canola oil and other inflammatory oils are hidden in most packaged foods.

Reduce processed carbohydrates and sugar that drives glycation. If you have chronic infections, gum disease, sinus issues, gut imbalances, work with a physician who can help you address these rather ignore them.

Third, support your endothelial healing. Regular aerobic exercise is one of the most powerful things you can do, which directly stimulates nitric oxide production, which heals and protects your blood vessel lining.

Even a brisk 30-minute walk most days produces measurable benefits. Consider nutrients that support vascular health. Magnesium, Vitamin K2, Vitamin C, Omega-3 fatty acids.

These aren't exotic interventions, they are foundational support for your vascular system. Here's what I keep coming back to. Your body doesn't see your heart and your kidneys as separate systems.

They are connected through a shared vascular network, responding to the same signals, vulnerable to the same damaging forces. When we understand this connection, we stop treating symptoms in isolation and start supporting the whole system.

And there's something else. I'm continuing to investigate something about how the kidneys themselves talk to the heart through hormonal signals and how disrupting that communication might explain even more about why these conditions cluster together.

It's one of those threads I can't quite let go of yet.

Closing Thoughts and Consultation Offer

If this episode raised questions about your own heart and kidney health and you want a personalized approach that looks at your unique root causes rather than just managing numbers, we offer consultations at the Kidney Institute where we dig into this deeper.

You can learn more at DrBismar.com Thanks for tuning into the Wellness Focus with Dr. Bisma, where we are rewriting the rules of health and giving you the tools to thrive.

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See you next time.