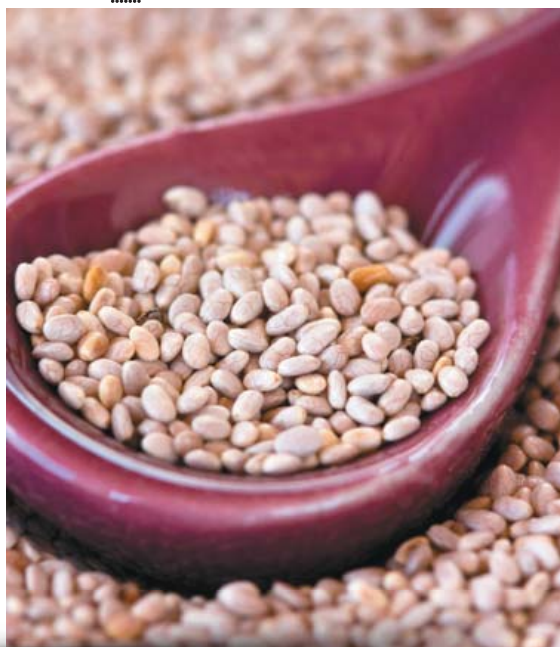




tracey **hayes.**



CHOLESTEROL

...Friend Before Foe

*Like air and water, we can't live without Cholesterol.
That's right, you do need cholesterol.*

The idea that Cholesterol is evil is very much ingrained in most people's minds. But this very harmful myth needs to be put to rest right now.

What am I getting at?

Cholesterol is not an enemy to your health, but instead essential and crucial for a wide variety of vital functions in your body.

And here's why ...

Cholesterol is found in every cell in your body, where it helps produce cell membranes, is the raw material your body uses to make many hormones, Vitamin D and bile acids that help your digestion. Cholesterol also helps in the formation of your memories and is vital for neurological function. Pretty important, right?

But there's a catch ...

It's very high cholesterol levels and the ratio between two types of cholesterol, HDL (protective to your heart) and LDL (a culprit that may contribute to heart disease) that may cause problems with your health. In a nutshell, keep your LDL lower and HDL higher.

Whilst I would never advise anyone to discontinue Cholesterol medication, here are a few simple and natural remedies you can have every day that have been shown to support healthy cholesterol levels. They taste good too.

Cocoa or Cacao powder.

Yes, as in chocolate (the darker the better). A recent American Journal of Clinical Nutrition report revealed that, just after 12 weeks, volunteers who participated in research which involved adding cocoa powder to their diet each day (tough gig, but someone had to do it!) had a 24% increase in their protective HDL levels. Try pure cacao powder ... no sugar and great added to a smoothie or stirred through yoghurt.

Walnuts.

Scientists found 'significant' improvement in cholesterol levels and blood vessel flexibility, which helps blood flow smoothly, just four hours after people consumed either the

shelled nuts or walnut oil! Opt for Aussie grown walnuts – fresher and not as dried out as their Californian counterparts. Taste better too! Just a handful a day will suffice, or add to your favourite salad.

Berries.

Blueberries, blackberries and raspberries. It's no newsflash that berries are nutritious, but here's something you may not know. The liver is the organ that helps your body lower high cholesterol levels. Compounds found in berries appear to activate genes in the liver that help the liver do its job. Fresh or frozen, but there's also a powdered version that's easier, cheaper and great in a smoothie.

Lecithin.

Outstanding results published recently from a trial using lecithin showed a significant reduction in total cholesterol and of most importance, LDL concentrations in just the first month! Lecithin keeps your liver in tip-top shape, important for managing cholesterol. Just sprinkle a dessert spoon onto muesli, stir through yogurt or just add to your favourite smoothie. It has a really pleasant flavour. A note on quality ... make sure your lecithin comes from a non-GMO source. German lecithin usually fits the bill. If the granules don't appeal, capsules might.

Chia seeds.

What a superstar! The outer coating of the seed, when moist, provides loads of gel-like soluble fibre – essential to managing healthy cholesterol levels. With more fibre than oat-bran, these little powerhouses also contain nature's richest plant based source of omega 3, more magnesium than broccoli, more calcium than milk and more vitamin C than oranges. Oh so easy to add to anything, because they have no flavour of their own!

Need to know more? Just ask.

And remember ... if you need to, consult your healthcare specialist.