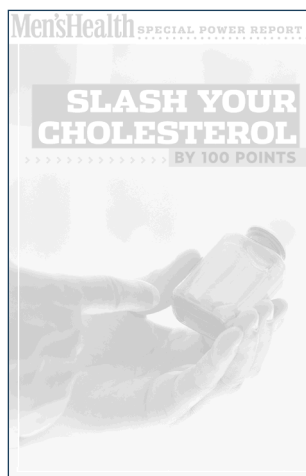


8



SLASH YOUR CHOLESTEROL

BY 100 POINTS

LEARN TO LOVE ASIAN FOOD

It happens every day. Men who seem the picture of health drop dead of a heart attack, leaving behind grieving friends and family. But you don't have to let it happen to you.

You can cut out plaque that's clogging your arteries and prevent more from forming by starting to eat the Asian way. It can lower your cholesterol by as much as 40% in 21 days! Based on an average total cholesterol of 250, that could be a 100-point drop!

The Science

The Asian diet—shorthand for the traditional diets of China, Japan, and neighboring South Korea, India, Thailand, and other Pacific Rim countries—has been called the healthiest in the world. And no wonder: Research on 6,500 people in rural mainland China shows that they consume half as much fat and three times as much fiber, and that their meat consumption is one tenth that of the U.S.

Not surprisingly, their mean cholesterol level is 127 mg per deciliter (mg/dl),

compared to our 203 mg/dl. The kicker: Compared to the U.S., their rates of death from heart disease are almost 17 times less for men and 6 times less for women.

“If all Americans ate like this, we could prevent 80 to 90% of all chronic degenerative diseases, including heart disease,” says T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D., professor of nutritional biochemistry at Cornell University and an expert on the links between diet and cancer who has done extensive studies on the Asian diet.

The Plan

Load your plate with rice, whole grains, noodles, and flatbreads. Top them with vegetables—bok choy, bean sprouts, black beans, bamboo shoots—and fish. Milk and milk products aren't part of the traditional Asian diet; use low-fat varieties sparingly. You can also have 4 oz of lean meat once a week. Since you'll have little milk in this diet, take a supplement with calcium and vitamin D.

Fill your kitchen with brown rice, whole grains, noodles, vegetables, and fish. Stock up on standard Asian condiments such as low-sodium soy sauce, ginger, and chiles. More exotic Asian flavorings include lemongrass, tamarind, and turmeric, available in upscale grocery stores or Asian food stores. They'll add flavor without fat or calories.

3 NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS THAT REDUCE CHOLESTEROL

PHYTOSTEROL SUPPLEMENTS ▶ Phytosterols, the magic ingredient in Benecol and Take Control spreads, are now available in supplements. According to David Kritchevsky, Ph.D., an expert on phytosterols at the Wistar Institute in Philadelphia, there's every reason to believe that these products should be just as effective as the spreads. Phytosterol studies show that 1.5 to 3.3 g a day is the most effective dosage. Divide the total dose among all your meals. It's generally recommended that you take supplements 30 minutes before a meal to allow time for tablets to dissolve. Because phytosterols may lower levels of fat-soluble nutrients such as beta-carotene, eat lots of fruit and veggies to compensate. Two phytosterol products are Natrol Beta Sitosterol and Kholesterol Blocker.

NIACIN ▶ Also known as nicotinic acid or vitamin B₃, niacin has been shown to reduce LDL cholesterol by 10 to 20%, reduce triglycerides by 20 to 50%, and raise beneficial HDL cholesterol by 15 to 35%. Take niacin only under a doctor's supervision. The recommended dose of 2 to 3 g can have serious, though rare, side effects.

SOLUBLE FIBER ▶ About 15 g of soluble fiber a day lowers LDL cholesterol 5 to 10% by binding cholesterol-containing bile acids in the intestine and excreting them. Can't stomach that much fiber? Take soluble fiber supplements with meals—along with plenty of liquid. Three rounded tablespoons of Metamucil provides 7 g of soluble fiber a day. Three 10-oz drinks of Fiber Plan (by Shaklee) taken daily provide 15 g of soluble fiber. In a study, those 15 g a day lowered LDL levels by 10.5% in 6 months.