



# **The Good News About “Bad” Cholesterol**

*Plus, My Best Advice for  
Your Heart Health*

by Dr. Stephen Sinatra



## About Dr. Stephen Sinatra

Dr. Stephen Sinatra is a top cardiologist whose integrative approach to treating cardiovascular disease has helped thousands.

His expertise is grounded in more than 40 years of clinical practice, research, and study beginning as an attending physician at Manchester Memorial Hospital (Eastern Connecticut Health Network). His career there included 9 years as chief of cardiology, 18 years as director of medical education, 7 years as director of echocardiography, 3 years as director of cardiac rehabilitation, and a year as director of the weight-reduction program.

In 1987, Dr. Sinatra founded the New England Heart Center. Through it, he became a well-known advocate of combining conventional medical treatments for heart disease with complementary nutritional, anti-aging, and psychological therapies.

Today, Dr. Sinatra is a leading authority on integrative solutions for heart health. He has written a more than a dozen books on natural ways to treat many of the heart health conditions we face—including the best-selling book *Lower Your Blood Pressure in Eight Weeks: A Revolutionary Program for a Longer, Healthier Life*. He also developed the highly viewed webinar *8 Steps to Lower Blood Pressure Naturally*.

# INTRODUCTION

Dear Reader,

For years, cholesterol has been thought to be the major marker for heart disease—but that's been a major mistake.

While it's certainly a contributing factor, cholesterol is not the villain that conventional medicine has made it out to be. And while millions of Americans have been concentrating solely on their HDL and LDL levels, the real villain has been running rampant, causing irrevocable damage in more people than I can count.



This has got to stop and, hopefully, now it will.

You're just moments away from learning the truth about cholesterol, the identity of your heart's #1 enemy, and my best advice for fighting heart disease.

You'll also learn my top 4 nutrients for heart health, simple lifestyle enhancements that can have a tremendously positive effect on your heart, and 6 risk factors that you must avoid if you are to stay well.

In this report, I'm sharing with you information and advice I shared with the thousands of patients I counseled over the years—information you may not be hearing anywhere else. I hope you'll read it carefully.

For more information about heart health, you can also join me on Facebook at [facebook.com/SinatraMD](https://facebook.com/SinatraMD).

From my heart to yours,

*Stephen Sinatra M.D.*  
Stephen Sinatra, M.D.

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I'm not your average doctor when it comes to cholesterol. Why? Because I don't believe cholesterol is the enemy mainstream medicine and pharmaceutical companies want you to think it is.

In fact, nothing is further from the truth. Your body needs cholesterol—you should embrace it.

## Here Are 7 Important Things Cholesterol Does for Your Health

1. Synthesizes nutrients and hormones.
2. Facilitates cell communication.
3. Provides memory and brain support.
4. Strengthens your immunity.
5. Repairs damage that happens within your cardiovascular system.
6. Acts as an antioxidant, neutralizing the damaging effects of free radicals.
7. Is the raw material your body needs to make progesterone, estrogen, cortisol, testosterone, and vitamin D.

## So, what exactly is cholesterol?

It's a fatty substance produced by the liver and is a part of every cell in your body.

It moves through your body with the help of two proteins:

- LDL—which delivers cholesterol to the cells that need it.
- HDL—which picks up excess cholesterol and carries it back to the liver for recycling and excretion.

## LDL is often referred to as “bad” cholesterol, but that’s very misleading...

In the blood, LDL is completely safe and it's impossible for your cells to absorb too much of it. LDL only becomes unsafe when it interacts with harmful free radicals. When this happens, LDL is oxidized—and trouble can begin to brew.





So, when you get down to it, LDL cholesterol isn't the problem. The real problem is whether your body's antioxidant system can effectively neutralize the free radicals that are floating around before they damage your LDL molecules.

### **“So, if this is true, why does cholesterol have such a bad rep?”**

This is a question I get more times than I can count...

If I had to answer it using just three words, those words would be “doctors and pills.”

In other words, I'd have to point a finger (or two) in the direction of mainstream medicine and the pharmaceutical industry.

As mentioned earlier, they're still telling people that cholesterol is bad news—and they're just plain wrong.

But to be honest, a long time ago I used to believe that too. It made sense back then, based on the research available at the time. But my thinking changed when I began to see conflicting results among my own patients and in the medical research.

For example, I saw many patients with heart disease even though their total cholesterol level was low. For many patients it was as low as 150!

Plus, in those days we pushed people to undergo angiograms (invasive arterial catheterization imaging) if they had cholesterol levels greater than 280 and had suggested symptoms of blockages. Indeed, many times we saw that their arteries were diseased. But often, their arteries were completely healthy.

I soon found other doctors who had made similar discoveries, and I heard how study findings were being manipulated.

In fact, retired Vanderbilt University biochemist George Mann—who helped develop the world-famous Framingham heart disease study that raised interest in cholesterol—later described the cholesterol hypothesis as “the greatest scam ever perpetrated on the American public.”

## **After all, just look at the French!**

The French have the highest total cholesterol levels in Europe—about 250—but they also have the lowest incidence of heart disease.

And a 10-year study on the Greek island of Crete failed to record a single heart attack despite its participants having an average total cholesterol of well over 200.

## **Then there’s the well-known statistic suggesting that half of all heart attacks occur in people with “normal” total cholesterol.**

In other words, even though we may find cholesterol at the “scene of the crime” with cardiovascular episodes, cholesterol isn’t necessarily the perpetrator.

So now you’re wondering...

## **“Doc, something must be the culprit behind heart disease... if it’s not cholesterol, what is it?”**

Cardiologists are slowly accepting the fact that the #1 culprit conspiring to threaten your cardiovascular health is inflammation.

Inflammation is your body’s first line of defense against injury or infection. It’s a natural process of self-preservation that kicks into gear when your body fears that it has been invaded by harmful bacteria and other irritants.

Inflammation is what’s at play when your body heals your wounds, fights off colds and flus, the list goes on. But...

Inflammation can become chronic and go into constant overdrive. That’s when it begins to cause a variety of health problems, including heart disease.

You see, when the body senses infection or any sort of trauma, it releases molecules known as cytokines. A cytokine is a pro-inflammatory mediator that sends signals to your cells that



trigger an inflammatory response. In other words, cytokines send out a call for help. They also trigger the production of a protein you may have heard of—C-reactive protein (CRP).

CRP is an inflammatory molecule secreted from your liver. It starts out as a good guy, but CRP increases very rapidly and too much of it is not a good thing.

You want no more than .8 mg/dL of CRP in your system, and any amount over that signals that your inflammatory process has gone into overdrive and you're in a state of inflammation overload.

This is why the presence of CRP is such an excellent measure of chronic inflammation.

## **The higher your CRP count, the more you may need to be concerned about atherosclerotic plaque buildup.**

In multiple studies, CRP has been identified as a potent predictor of future cardiovascular events in otherwise healthy men and women—one that's far more reliable than elevated cholesterol levels.

For example, one study of CRP in 28,000 American women determined that CRP (and not cholesterol) was the best indicator of cardiovascular risk. And, by the way, high CRP levels also predicted greater risk for men.

But you can fight back. You can lower your body's inflammation and reduce your levels of CRP, if you know what to do.

## How to Overcome the 6 Risk Factors for Inflammation and Heart Disease



### MANAGE YOUR STRESS LEVELS

Stress hormones promote inflammation, as well as arterial constriction, high blood pressure, increased heart rate, cholesterol oxidation, and blood clotting. Acute stress, such as anger, can cause heart attack or stroke.



### LIMIT, OR BETTER YET ELIMINATE, SUGAR

Sugar contributes to inflammation of the arterial walls by generating an insulin spike. When insulin spikes, it damages the endothelial lining of blood vessels, thus leading to heart attack or stroke.



### AVOID TRANS FATTY ACIDS

The unnatural trans fatty acids used in processed foods ignite inflammation, raise Lp(a) (a highly inflammatory form of cholesterol), promote cholesterol oxidation, and lower beneficial HDL cholesterol.



### KEEP YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE IN THE NORMAL RANGE

High blood pressure damages arterial walls, leading to arterial damage and atherosclerosis. It can also enlarge the heart, creating an extra oxygen demand. So, to keep inflammation at bay, you want to maintain normal blood pressure levels.



### AVOID UNNECESSARY RADIATION

X-rays and other medical procedures that use radiation have the potential to damage the sensitive lining of arterial walls. So, ask your doctor if the tests that he or she is requesting are truly necessary, or can be replaced with diagnostic tools that won't expose you to radiation.



### INVESTIGATE YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

Research is beginning to reveal specific information about one's predisposition to inflammation and cardiovascular disease. Ask your cardiologist about available tests if you have concerns about your family history.

To keep inflammation at bay, it's also important to avoid smoking, maintain a healthy weight, eat an anti-inflammatory diet (one full of vegetables, lean meats, and fruit), and keep your blood sugar low.





## Plus, there are 4 powerful nutrients that can help you maintain good cardiovascular health...

### **CoQ10**

Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) is a key ingredient in my core nutritional program for supporting all cardiovascular conditions. I simply would not practice cardiology without it.

Often called the “miracle nutrient” or the “universal antioxidant,” CoQ10 exists in the mitochondria—or power plants—of our cells, and scavenges and destroys free radicals that cause cardiovascular disease. Dozens of studies have documented the actions of CoQ10 on improving heart health.

#### *How much CoQ10 should you take?*

I suggest that healthy people under age 60 take a minimum daily dose of 50–100 mg of CoQ10. If you're over 60 or on a statin drug, I recommend increasing your CoQ10 intake to 100 to 200 mg daily.

I also recommend dividing the dosages, taking half of your daily CoQ10 in the morning and the rest in the afternoon. That's because when CoQ10 is taken twice a day, as opposed to one, the blood levels are much higher. That's also the same for many other heart vitamins.

### **L-carnitine**

L-carnitine, a water-soluble nutrient produced from the amino acids lysine and methionine, is found in all living tissue. It helps deliver extra oxygen to blocked arteries. It also prevents the production of toxic fatty acid and helps circulation problems, as it improves blood flow by supporting better use of oxygen in the tissues.

### *How much L-carnitine should you take?*

Take 400–1,200 mg in divided dosages, depending upon your clinical status. Start at the low end of the dosage scale and work up until you achieve the desired effect. Like CoQ10, L-carnitine may require fine-tuning to obtain the optimal therapeutic blood level.

## **Magnesium**

Magnesium is essential to healthy heart function, yet low magnesium is one of the most underdiagnosed electrolyte abnormalities in clinical practice today.

There is a direct relationship between low magnesium and high blood pressure. Over time, low magnesium levels may predispose the interior of your vessels to contract (go into spasm) and, eventually, high blood pressure can result. Magnesium can come to the rescue of contracted blood vessels and even reverse some of the damage.

### *How much magnesium should you take?*

To replenish low magnesium levels, take 400–800 mg of magnesium daily. Although magnesium oxide is a common form used in many supplements, I have found it is not easily soluble or well absorbed by the body. I recommend magnesium citrate, taurinate, or orotate.

## **D-ribose**

Investigators believe that under certain cardiac conditions—especially during ischemic episodes like angina and heart attack when the heart is deprived of oxygen—there’s a profound depression of the high energy compound, ATP. With a drop in ATP, the heart struggles to pump.

However, when oxygen-starved hearts receive supplemental D-ribose, energy recovery and diastolic function often return to normal in several days or less.

### *How much D-ribose should you take?*

Depending upon your own particular situation, I recommend taking a total of 10–15 grams of D-ribose daily. Take in divided dosages of 5 grams each with meals.

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Keeping your heart healthy and happy isn’t complicated or confusing. If your doctor makes it seem that way or doesn’t spend the time you need to fully understand your particular health needs, you’re always entitled to seek a second opinion.

I encourage you to keep abreast of new research and developments and do all you can to be your own heart health advocate.



# Dr. Sinatra

AMERICA'S #1 INTEGRATIVE CARDIOLOGIST®

## It's Easy to Connect with Dr. Sinatra Anywhere, Anytime!

To make sure you stay on top of the latest news and recommendations regarding your heart and your health, keep in touch with Dr. Stephen Sinatra 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, via one of these channels:



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*drsinatra.com* and *heartmdinstitute.com* empower you with the tools and information you need to take an active role in managing your health. You can easily access information on a wide range of health conditions, get answers to the most frequently asked questions about heart health, or read Dr. Sinatra's blog where he discusses the latest integrative solutions to keep your heart healthy.



### Get Dr. Sinatra's FREE E-Newsletter

Every week, Dr. Sinatra emails you the latest research, heart health news, and solutions that will help you achieve the best heart health possible. If you don't already receive his e-newsletter, you can sign up for it on *drsinatra.com*.



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