



FALL 2025

Quarterly
NEWSLETTER

Cholesterol: Friend Not Foe

For decades, cholesterol has been demonized as the primary cause of heart disease. Yet science increasingly supports a more nuanced view: **cholesterol is not only necessary, but vital for life.** Your body tightly regulates cholesterol because it performs a wide range of essential tasks. While sky-high LDL levels can pose a risk, extremely low cholesterol—especially when induced by statin drugs—can also impair critical functions. Let's take a deep dive into the many benefits of cholesterol and the growing concerns about statin overuse.

Why Cholesterol Matters

Cholesterol isn't just something you eat—it's something your body makes. In fact, about 75% of your cholesterol is produced internally because it's essential to survival.

Hormone Production:

- It helps your body create key hormones, including estrogen, testosterone, cortisol, and vitamin D. These regulate everything from mood and energy to immune function and metabolism. When cholesterol levels drop too low, these systems can suffer.

Digestion and Nutrient Absorption:

- Cholesterol plays a critical role in digestion. Your liver uses cholesterol to make bile, which breaks down dietary fats and helps you absorb fat-soluble vitamins like A, D, E, and K. Without it, nutrient absorption suffers. Cholesterol in the skin transforms sunlight into vitamin D₃, which is needed for bone strength, immune regulation, hormonal balance, and mood and mental clarity. Low cholesterol can mean low vitamin D, even with sun exposure.

Cell Health & Repair:

- At the cellular level, cholesterol gives strength and stability to every cell membrane in your body. It also helps with tissue repair—when there's inflammation or damage, your body sends cholesterol to help patch things up. That's why elevated cholesterol often is a response to a problem, not the cause.



Brain and Nerve Function:

- Cholesterol is vital for brain health. It supports myelin, the protective sheath around nerves, and is essential for synapse formation, memory, and cognition. Some studies have linked very low cholesterol to issues like memory loss, depression, and even increased risk of suicide.

Growth and Reproduction:

- For infants and children, cholesterol supports rapid brain development. For adults, it's necessary for fertility, libido, skin health, and a strong immune system.

Cholesterol is not the enemy. It's a key player in keeping you alive and healthy. Your health is more than a cholesterol number. Rather than fear cholesterol, take a broader view. Support your body naturally, reduce inflammation, and make choices that strengthen the systems cholesterol is designed to protect.

Motivational Mindset >>>

"You can't medicate your way out of a lifestyle you refused to change."

Balance & Mobility Group Fitness Class:

WHEN: Tuesday/Thursday 11:00 am

WHERE: Royal Palm/Grand Cypress Rooms

COST: \$5 - payable by cash, check, or Venmo

For more information, visit www.fit.health/groupfitness

Statins: A Double Edged Sword

Statins are commonly prescribed to lower LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and reduce heart attack risk—especially for those with existing heart disease. But many are given statins preventatively, even without a history of heart issues. That’s when risks may outweigh benefits.

Side effects to watch for:

- Muscle pain, fatigue, and brain fog
- Increased blood sugar and type 2 diabetes risk
- Hormonal imbalances (affecting mood, libido, and energy)
- Depletion of CoQ10, a key nutrient for energy—especially in muscles and the heart

Statins & the Brain:

Some studies have raised concerns about a potential connection between long-term statin use and cognitive decline, including Alzheimer’s and dementia. Some statin users report memory lapses and slower thinking. Research suggests that very low cholesterol may impair brain function, as the brain depends on cholesterol for neurotransmitter activity and neuron health.

A 2018 review found a small but notable increase in cognitive issues among older statin users. Encouragingly, some people regained mental clarity after stopping the drug.

Bottom line: Aggressively lowering cholesterol in older adults—especially when cognitive health is a concern—may not be the best choice.

Health Is Bigger Than Your Cholesterol Number

High cholesterol isn’t always a red flag. A better question:

- How are your HDL levels, triglycerides, and inflammation markers?
- Are you sleeping, eating, and moving well?
- Are you managing stress?

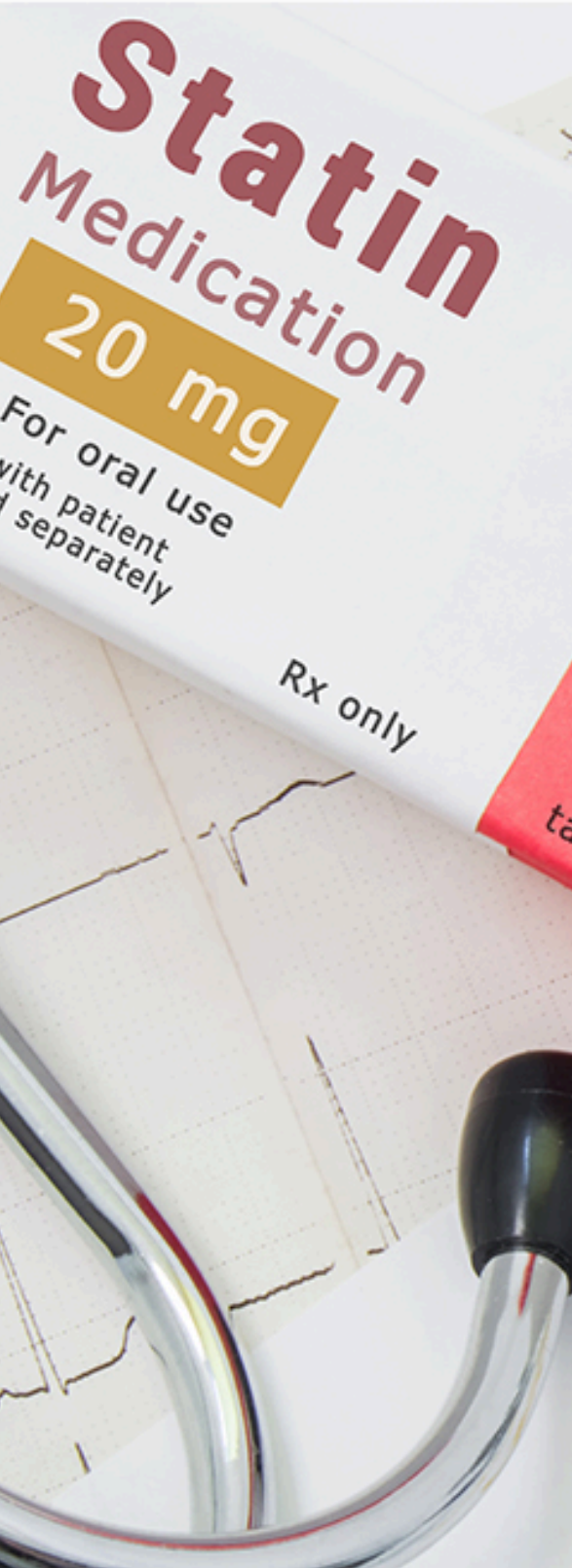
Remember:

Heart disease is driven by inflammation, primarily from processed sugar, not cholesterol. And chronic inflammation comes from lifestyle, not from having too much of a naturally occurring substance your body works hard to produce.

Before jumping to meds, focus on the basics:

- Eat whole, unprocessed foods
- Cut refined sugars and seed oils
- Move your body daily
- Prioritize quality sleep

Already on statins and experiencing any of the side effects above? Talk to your doctor. If you are active, maintain a healthy weight, and have no other significant risk factors, mildly elevated cholesterol may not warrant statin therapy as the best path forward.



“Your brain depends on cholesterol to think, remember, and repair itself. What are we risking by lowering it?”



Did you Know?

✓ Countries like France and Switzerland have some of the highest average cholesterol levels and some of the lowest rates of heart disease.

- One big difference? Their diets aren't drowning in industrial seed oils, glyphosate-sprayed grains, or chemical additives. Instead, they eat whole, traditionally prepared foods — real butter, pasture-raised meats, and fresh produce. Combine that with more walking, slower meals, reduced stress, and less ultra-processed snacking, and you get lower chronic inflammation — the engine behind heart disease — despite higher cholesterol numbers.

✓ Statins are among the most prescribed drugs in the U.S., yet heart disease remains the #1 cause of death.

- If lowering cholesterol were the magic bullet, you'd expect those numbers to drop dramatically. Instead, heart disease rates remain stubbornly high, suggesting other factors — such as diet quality, inflammation, chronic stress, and metabolic health — are more crucial concerns.

✓ The global statin market brings in over \$15 billion a year.

- These drugs are designed to be taken daily, often for life — making them one of the most profitable products in pharmaceutical history. In 2020, statins raked in \$14.1 billion in U.S. sales, a figure projected to climb to \$17.3 billion by 2027—far beyond medicine, right into mega-industry. With that much money on the line, it's worth asking: Are we being given the whole truth about who actually benefits from them?



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✓ Many statin trials are funded, designed, and analyzed by the same companies that make them.

- This creates a major conflict of interest — especially when negative results can be buried, and positive findings are amplified. Independent re-analyses of trial data many times paint a very different picture than the glossy journal headlines.

✓ In 2004, a panel of “experts” — 8 out of 9 with financial ties to statin manufacturers — voted to lower the “acceptable” cholesterol range.

- Overnight, millions of healthy people were suddenly labeled as needing medication, creating a tidal wave of new lifelong statin customers.

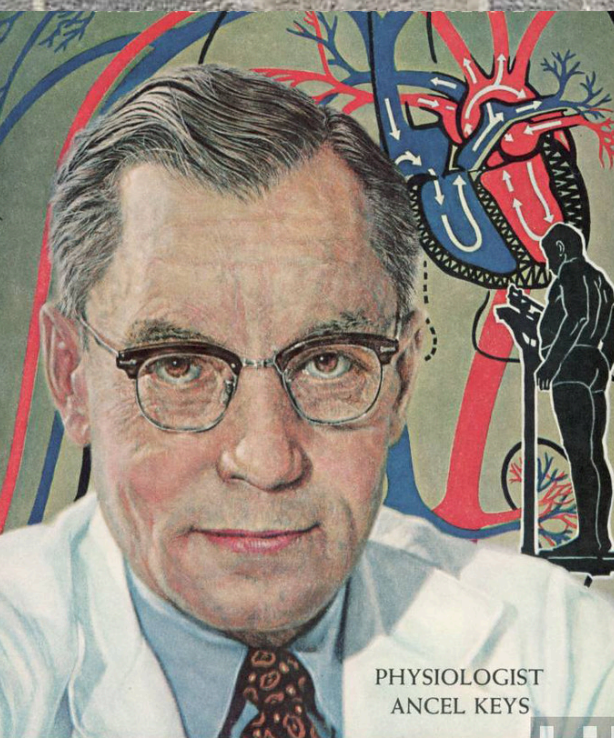
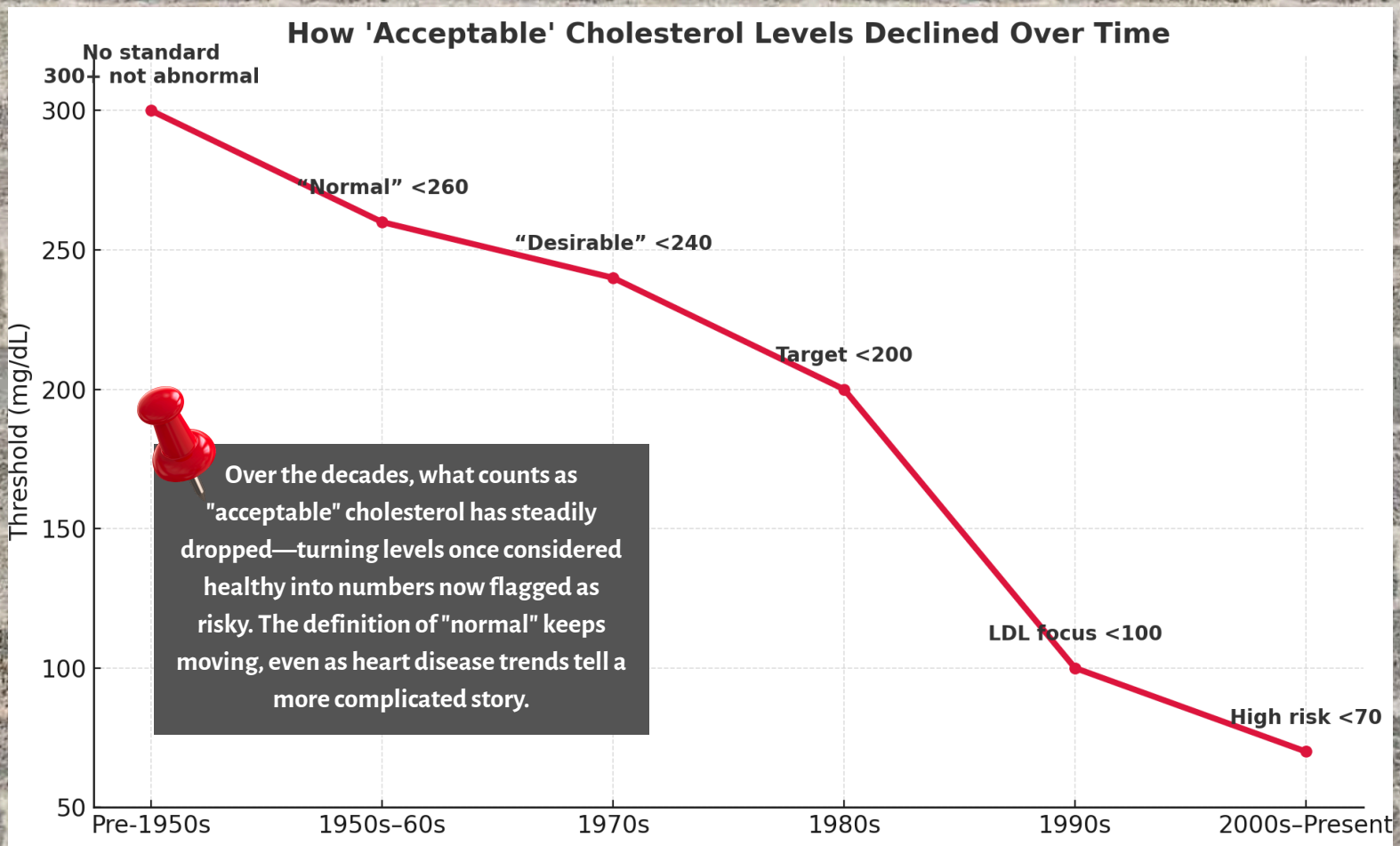
✓ Those smiling, active seniors in statin commercials don't tell the full story.

- The fine print lists potential side effects including muscle pain and weakness, liver damage, and even memory problems. Side effects are often downplayed or written off as “just aging.”

🔥 Bottom Line: Cholesterol isn't the villain it's made out to be, and statins aren't a magic bullet. Always ask questions, read the fine print, and remember—follow the money.



REDEFINING “HEALTHY” – one number at a time



PHYSIOLOGIST
ANCEL KEYS

The Lie That Made Us Fear Cholesterol

In the 1950s, physiologist **Ancel Keys** promoted the idea that dietary fat—especially saturated fat—was the main cause of heart disease. His famous *Seven Countries Study* linked fat intake with heart disease, but it was deeply flawed: he selectively included countries that supported his theory and ignored others that didn't. Despite criticism, his work shaped public health policy, pushing the idea that “fat is the enemy.” This led to decades of low-fat guidelines, cholesterol fear, and the rise of ultra processed foods—while overlooking other key drivers of heart disease like sugar, inflammation, and lifestyle.

Featured Recipe

Fall into Flavor Crockpot Chili

INGREDIENTS:

Protein & Beans

- 1 lb ground beef
- 2 cans (15 oz) kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (15 oz) black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (15 oz) pinto beans, drained and rinsed

Veggies & Flavor Base

- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 green bell pepper, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 can (15 oz) fire-roasted diced tomatoes
- 1 can (15 oz) tomato sauce
- 2 tbsp tomato paste

Seasonings

- 3 tbsp chili powder
- 1 tsp smoked paprika (gives a campfire-in-the-fall vibe)
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp oregano
- ½ tsp cinnamon (secret fall twist—warm but not sweet)
- ½ tsp cayenne (optional, for heat)
- 1½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper

Liquid

- 1½ cups beef bone broth

Toppings

- Shredded cheddar
- Sour cream
- Sliced green onions
- Fresh cilantro
- Crushed tortilla chips



INSTRUCTIONS:

Brown the meat

- In a skillet over medium heat, brown the ground beef/turkey until no longer pink. Drain excess fat.

Load the crockpot

- Add meat, beans, onion, peppers, garlic, tomatoes, tomato sauce, tomato paste, all seasonings, and broth to the crockpot.
- Stir well to combine.

Set & forget

- Cook on LOW for 6–8 hours or HIGH for 3–4 hours.
- The longer it simmers, the richer the flavor.

Taste & adjust

- About 30 minutes before serving, taste and adjust salt/spices if needed.

Serve

- Ladle into bowls and pile on toppings. Best enjoyed with cornbread or crusty bread on a cool fall evening.

💡 *Tip: If you like a thicker chili, remove the crockpot lid for the last 30 minutes of cooking to let extra liquid evaporate.*

happy
FALL

HEALTH INSIGHTS

Simple tips. Real results. Better health.

Myth vs. Fact:

Why Your Body Actually Needs Fat

The right fats fuel your body, it's the processed imposters you should ditch.

Myth: Eating fat makes you fat.

Fact: It's not the fat itself that harms health — it's the ultra-processed foods and hidden additives that come with much of today's packaged food. Real, natural fats from whole foods (like salmon, eggs, and nuts) support your brain, hormones, and energy. The bigger threat is the refined carbs, added sugars, and industrial oils often lurking alongside "low-fat" labels.



Nutrient in the Spotlight:

CoQ10

The nutrient statins quietly steal.

Statins don't just lower cholesterol — they also lower CoQ10, a nutrient your cells need to make energy. Low CoQ10 can mean muscle pain, fatigue, and brain fog. You can replenish it with beef, chicken, sardines, and spinach, or supplement with your doctor's guidance. This step isn't "alternative" — it's basic damage control.



Swap This For That:

Smart Swaps, Better Health

Ditch the fake foods, natural fats are doing the heavy lifting your body actually needs.

- Swap margarine → For grass-fed butter or ghee (natural fats over processed seed oils).
- Swap shortening/vegetable oil → For coconut oil or avocado oil (stable at higher cooking temps).
- Swap sugary breakfast cereal → For eggs with veggies (protein + healthy fats keep you satisfied without spiking blood sugar).
- Swap low-fat yogurt → For full-fat, unsweetened yogurt topped with fresh fruit (keeps you full longer and avoids hidden sugars).

Hidden Ingredient to Watch:

Seed Oils: The Inflammation Oil Pipeline

The heart risk hiding in plain sight.

Soybean, corn, and canola oils—often labeled as "heart healthy" vegetable oil—are cheap, shelf-stable, and sneak into packaged foods, salad dressings, margarine, baked goods, and fast-food fryers. They're loaded with omega-6 fats that, in excess, drive inflammation, a major contributor to heart disease. Swapping them for good quality extra-virgin olive oil, beef tallow, or grass-fed butter cuts a hidden risk and adds fats your body actually needs.



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