

Cholesterol Education Month: Improving Vascular Health

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The vascular system, also known as the circulatory system, is in charge of your vascular health and made up of a network of blood vessels, capillaries, and veins that carries blood and lymph fluid throughout the body. Lymph fluid is a combination of water and blood cells, which gets rid of waste by draining toxins away from the body. The veins and arteries deliver nutrients and oxygen to the body tissues.

Cardiovascular disease (often abbreviated to CVD or vascular disease) covers any condition that impacts the blood vessels or any part of the circulatory system. This includes diseases that affect your vessels or arteries. CVD describes anything from blood clots, artery diseases, aortic aneurysms, inflammation of the vessels, abnormalities of the lymph nodes, and circulatory problems. While the exact cause of vascular disease is unknown, common triggers are high blood pressure, high cholesterol, clots, diabetes, smoking, and lack of exercise.

How to Improve Vascular Health

Below, we outline how you can improve your vascular health and reduce the likelihood of vascular diseases.

Maintain a Healthy Weight

Excess weight can increase the risk of CVD, high blood pressure, and diabetes. This is why it is essential to maintain a healthy weight. The best way to do this is by making healthier lifestyle choices.

While some suggest eating small, frequent meals throughout the day to lose weight, [evidence suggests](#) that focusing on meal quality and exercise is likely to yield better results. There is also [evidence](#) that eating earlier during the day can help weight-loss efforts and improve glucose levels and insulin resistance. All of this will have a beneficial impact on your vascular health.

Exercise

Regular exercise and adopting a healthier lifestyle can reduce the likelihood of some circulatory diseases and significantly [improve vascular health](#). It can also prevent blood clots, [reduce cholesterol](#), and keeps the arterial lining free of deposits.

However, that is not the only benefit of exercise. It can [reduce inflammation](#) and improve cardiovascular health. Those that suffer from high blood pressure may also benefit from regular exercise as it has been [shown to reduce high blood pressure](#).

Give up Smoking

Smoking can have a detrimental impact on your vascular health. It increases the plaque levels in the veins and can lead to clots inside the veins or arteries. Smoking also increases harmful cholesterol levels and decreases 'good' cholesterol levels. All of this can eventually result in stroke and heart disease. Giving up smoking reduces your risk factors for these conditions.

Drink Less Alcohol

Although there is typically no harm in occasionally drinking alcohol, too much alcohol can lead to [peripheral artery disease](#) and heart conditions. To help prevent vascular problems, it is better to limit your intake of alcohol.

Why You Need to Improve Your Vascular Health

A decline in your vascular health can [lead to several conditions](#), such as strokes and CVD. In the United States, one person dies from CVD every 34 seconds. In 2020 alone, one out of every five people died from heart disease.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle and diet can go a long way toward helping you improve your vascular health. Indeed, [various studies show](#) that maintaining a healthy diet can reduce obesity, CVD, and metabolic diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

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