

# UNLEADED AND FIT

Staying Healthy with Dr. Aieta, N.D.

**Dr. Aieta,**

**I just turned 45 and was recently diagnosed with elevated cholesterol. My doctor suggested I go on a statin drug to help lower it. I was on it for about a month and started seeing side effects, such as muscle pain and hair loss. I decided to take myself off the medication and focus more on changing my diet. I chose, instead, to follow a low cholesterol, low saturated fat diet. Although I lost weight, my cholesterol only went down slightly. Is there anything you could recommend to help bring my cholesterol down?**

Saturated fats are responsible for some cases of high serum cholesterol, but diets high in sugar and carbohydrates can also contribute. People who consume high amounts of carbs and sugar are prone to insulin resistance.

Insulin is a hormone manufactured by the pancreas that regulates the level of sugar (or glucose) in the blood stream. When we consume a diet high in sugar and refined carbohydrates, our cells become insensitive to insulin. This is dangerous because insulin is required to move sugar, fats, cholesterol and protein into our cells

to be used as energy. Instead of entering the cells of the body, all of these things stay in the blood stream and become elevated as seen on a blood test.

When insulin doesn't work correctly, the pancreas makes more of it to compensate. As a result, high insulin stimulates the liver to produce more cholesterol. In other words, changing your diet to a low sugar/ lower carbohydrate one may result in substantial cholesterol reduction.

Also, according to research done by the Japanese National Institute of Agrobiological Sciences, small quantities of the toxic metal lead caused elevated serum cholesterol in experimental animals. In those tests, lead induced the genes responsible for creating the liver enzymes that produce cholesterol. Lead was also found to suppress a gene responsible for the production of a liver enzyme that breaks down and destroys cholesterol.

Although the lead-cholesterol connection hasn't been proven by research in humans yet, I can say that I've seen cholesterol level drop dramatically after removing lead from a person's system.

The process I use to remove lead from the body is called chelation, in which a natural sulfur compound called DMSA



will actually bind up heavy metals in the body and make them water soluble so they can be eliminated from the body. To test for lead and other heavy metals, a specialized test is performed on urine collected over a six-hour period after taking DMSA. The number of patients who test positive for lead and other heavy metals is staggering.

So, if you've tried a strict diet and your cholesterol is still high, have your lead levels checked.

*Dr. Frank Aieta is a board-certified and licensed Naturopathic Physician with a private practice in West Hartford, Conn. He specializes in the treatment of disease, using natural therapies such as acupuncture, homeopathy, spinal manipulation, clinical nutrition, and herbal medicine. If there is a specific topic you would like to see addressed in an upcoming column, you can e-mail him at [DrAieta@aol.com](mailto:DrAieta@aol.com), or visit [www.DrAieta.com](http://www.DrAieta.com) for additional information.*

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