Angina

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Angina is more than just chest pain. The symptoms are similar to those of a heart attack, albeit less severe, and they usually end in one to 10 minutes. Sufferers may experience chest discomfort ranging from heaviness, pressure or squeezing sensations to severe pain. This pain radiates into the left shoulder blade, left arm or jaw. The pain is worse after or during exertion and is usually better with rest. Angina can be precipitated by cold weather, high blood pressure, anxiety, stress and even a large meal. If the pains progressively worsen, this may be a sign of heart attack.

Angina occurs when the heart doesn’t receive enough oxygen and other nutrients to support the heart muscle. The ultimate cause is atherosclerosis, which is the depositing of plaque in the blood vessel walls. As plaque slowly plugs up (occludes) the arteries, it tends to accumulate in the areas with the most turbulent blood flow, more specifically the coronary blood vessels. A normal blood vessel can be occluded up to 75 per cent and still be able to deliver the same volume of blood. So essentially, symptoms are noticed only when blood vessels are well on their way to being occluded at more than 50 per cent. Some books even say 75 per cent occlusion has to be present before symptoms are noticed. Metabolic causes of angina, such as hypoglycemia and magnesium deficiency, also need to be addressed, but these are almost always secondary to atherosclerosis.

Bypass Surgery

Modern medicine offers patients treatments for heart disease such as bypass surgery, angiogram (cardiac catheterization) and balloon angioplasty. Let’s get to the real truth. In 1984 the New England Journal of Medicine published an article on heart attack (myocardial infarction) and mortality in a coronary artery surgery randomized trial. In 1983, the prestigious journal Circulation cited the same research paper and did a followup on the research findings in 1990, 10 years after the original study was done. These articles concluded that patients with occlusive disease in one, two and even all three of the major blood vessels did well without surgery. It also stated that regardless of the number of blockages, the death rate was the same—about one per cent annually. During the same year, the average death rate from bypass surgery was 10 per cent. In other words, bypass surgery is five to 10 times more likely to kill you than save you.
Naturopathic medicine has much to offer heart disease patients

Angiograms and Angioplasty
With regards to angiograms and angioplasty, the New England Journal of Medicine published an article in 1984 in which the authors concluded that the blockages found on the heart do not correlate with blood flow restriction. And the Journal of the American Medical Association published an article in 1992 concluding that 80 per cent of patients (134 of 168) recommended for catheterization did not need it!

Over the past 15 years, the Canadian and American Heart Associations have changed their dietary stances to adopt what naturopathic doctors have been recommending for 60 to 80 years—that is, increasing fibre, complex carbohydrates and fish oils while eliminating alcohol, coffee, cigarettes, saturated fats and hydrogenated oils from the diet.

Naturopathic doctors can suggest diet and lifestyle changes to patients, as well as offer treatments such as: intravenous chelation therapy to reverse atherosclerosis, intravenous ozone to kill micro-organisms that are known to cause heart disease, magnesium to dilate blood vessels and prevent angina caused by arterial spasm, coenzyme Q10 to supply more energy to the heart muscle and reduce angina attacks by 53 per cent, and hawthorn (Crataegus) to dilate blood vessels and improve cardiac energy metabolism. Many other recommendations can be given, but as all good naturopathic physicians know, the therapy must cater to the individual’s needs and specific disease pathology.

Modern surgical medicine for heart health has proven itself ineffective and even deadly. The use of pharmaceutical drugs may be necessary until the underlying causes of disease, such as atherosclerosis or magnesium deficiency, are identified and rectified—but ultimately, naturopathic medicine has much more to offer.

For a referral to a naturopathic doctor in your province, contact the Canadian Naturopathic Association toll-free at 877-628-7264. Web site: <naturopathicassoc.ca>.

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