



June, 2010



## "No Sweat" Fitness Exercise Essentials

We take a serious tone this month and ask that if you know a woman who currently has high cholesterol, please think about forwarding her this newsletter.

### Male diseases are from Mars, Women's from Venus



The same disease may express itself differently depending on the gender of the patient, however millions of American women are taking the same drugs as men when they may actually do more harm than good.

Since 1984, more women than men have died each year from heart disease and the gap between men and women's survival continues to widen. This is why doctors are prescribing (to approximately 12 million American women) cholesterol-lowering statin drugs as a preventive measure; they are sold under brand names like Lipitor, Zocor, and Crestor. The majority of current statin users don't have heart disease, but they do have high cholesterol. These statins carry a risk of serious side effects, yet amazingly, there is little evidence that they prevent heart disease in women, just men (men also do not suffer some of the drugs' side effects.)

Dr. Rita Redberg, a prominent cardiologist at UC San Francisco said, "There are millions of women on a drug with no know benefit and risks that are detrimental to their lifestyle and no one is talking about it. Why?" The need is great to find an answer since 42% of women who have heart attacks die within 1 year, compared to 24% of men and for women under age 50, a heart attack is twice as likely to be fatal than for men.

Gendar-based research is sorely lacking in the US. Before the 1990's women were largely excluded from clinical drug trials due to concerns about women's hormone fluctuations and pregnancy issues. True, there are now more studies that involve women, but researchers say doctors have not tailored treatments according to this data nor properly analyzed it.

In addition to the differences around heart disease, lung cancer also effects the sexes differently with more men developing it and dying while women who have never smoked having a higher risk of this cancer than male peers. Autism as well sees gender

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anomalies with boys being four times as likely to show signs of the disease, but it may affect girls more severely.

With health care being at the forefront of the news lately, it is important that we advocate for more gender-based research. Differences between the sexes are real and the medical community needs to recognize that one size does not fit all.

## 5 foods to add to your diet

Courtesy of the Mayo Clinic, here are the top 5 foods to lower your cholesterol:

\***High fiber foods such as oatmeal**--Five to 10 grams or more of soluble fiber a day decreases your total and LDL cholesterol.

\***Fish**--2 servings a week. Grill or bake the fish to avoid adding unhealthy fats.

\***Nuts**--eat a handful a day. Try using raw nuts instead of cheese or meat on a salad.

\***Olive oil**--using about 2 tablespoons daily in place of other fats in your diet.

\***Foods that have been fortified with plant sterols or stanols**--Margarines, orange juice and yogurt drinks with added plant sterols can help reduce LDL cholesterol by more than 10 percent.

If you would like to learn more about women's health issues, log on to

[www.womenshealthresearch.org](http://www.womenshealthresearch.org)

This website is run by the Society for Women's Health Research and has news, education information and advocacy opportunities.

Sincerely,

Mary Phillips  
"No Sweat" Fitness

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10%**

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