

# Cholesterol Lowering Medications and Cancer?

Millions of people in the United States take cholesterol lowering drugs in an attempt to reduce their risk of heart disease. Most of these people do not know that “such drugs cause cancer in rats and mice.”

The 1992 PDR stated that gemfibrozil (Lopid) caused cancer in rats at 10 times the human dose. The 1994 version says cancer can occur at 1.3 times the human dose.(1)

Some scientists argue that going from rodent studies to human cancer is a stretch. Possibly. Nevertheless, I will never forget a lecture I heard many years ago by a scientist for the FDA who said something to the effect of the following in a lecture: “People attack us for the use of rats in cancer studies. Rats are about 10 times harder than human beings. If something creates problems for a rat, we ought to look at it carefully.”

Common pharmaceutical cholesterol-lowering drugs (statin agents) have recently been shown to interfere with internal manufacture of CoQ10. This is an extremely important substance involved in protection of genetic material from oxidant attack. This could be a possible mechanism for increasing the risk of cancer. (2)

Interestingly, CoQ10 is also involved in preserving the function of mitochondria in energy production. Mitochondria are very abundant and active in heart muscle. CoQ10 has been shown to be beneficial in cardiomyopathy, suggesting a possible deficiency of this nutrient. What an irony it would be to learn that depressed levels of CoQ10 synthesis in

heart muscle, due to the use of cholesterol lowering drugs, was a significant factor in cardiomyopathy. (2)

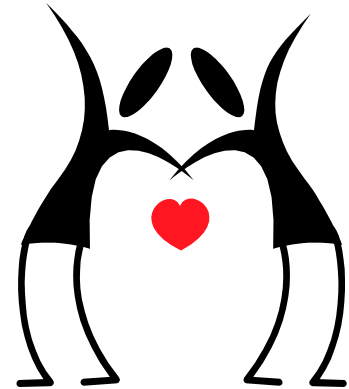
Recent research indicates that the natural vitamin E complex may be an important control of cholesterol levels. The key liver enzyme involved in cholesterol synthesis is called HMG-CoA reductase. Recent studies have shown that d-gamma tocotrienol can inhibit this enzyme by as much as 58.6 percent. (2)

Gamma tocotrienol is the precursor in nature to gamma tocopherol. This member of the vitamin E family has previously been shown to be significant in protecting the body from nitrogen based carcinogens. Synthetic or isolate alpha-tocopherol depresses levels of gamma tocopherol in the body. Supplementation for cheap vitamins may not help the heart disease problem, and may actually make it worse!

GNLD vitamin E contains the entire

family of nutrients associated with vitamin E and always has!

1. Fackelmann, Kathleen, “Cholesterol and Cancer: Do cholesterol-lowering drugs lead to tumors?” *Science News*, Vol. 149, March 2, 1996, p. 136.
2. Rubin, Daniel, “Tocotrienols: Their Effects on Plasma Lipids and Regulation of Cell Division,” *Focus on Allergy Research Group*, September/October 1998, p. 4.
3. Christen, Stephan, et al., “Gamma-Tocopherol traps mutagenic electrophiles such as Nox and complements alpha-tocopherol: Physiological implications,” *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA*, Vol. 94, pp. 3217-3222, April 1997.



**“Supplementation with cheap vitamin E products may not help the heart disease problem, and may actually make it worse!”**

## Nighttime illumination and Cancer Risk

A recent study on rats has shown that cancer grew twice as fast in animals exposed to low level light at night when they should be experiencing total darkness. The same was true of animals exposed to constant light.

Light suppresses production of melatonin, a hormone which functions as an antioxidant and helps protect

against cancer. Thomas Edison, what have you done to us?

Raloff, Janet, “Does Light Have a Dark Side?” *Science News*, October 17, 1998, p. 250.

