

6 Ways to Reduce Inflammation -- Without a Statin Drug

Experts predict that as a result of the so-called JUPITER study, which seemed to show that the statin drug Crestor lowers the risk of heart attacks and strokes in those with high levels of inflammation, will lead to millions of people being put on statin drugs.

But the benefits were actually *tiny* -- about 0.72 percent of the statin takers in the trial had a heart attack or stroke, compared with 1.5 percent of those taking placebos.

Instead of a statin drug that comes with dangerous side effects, try these six measures instead:

1. **Stop smoking.** Smoking hardens the arteries and increase inflammation. But research shows you can reverse all the damaging effects to your arteries within 10 years of quitting.
2. **Think olive oil, fish, and nuts.** People who stick with a Mediterranean-style diet based on fruits, vegetables, nuts, and olive oil can lower their levels of inflammation. It works by increasing the amount of foods you eat that are rich in omega-3 fats, which fight inflammation.
3. **Get active.** Exercise a great way to lower inflammation without any of the side effects associated with medications.
4. **Shrink your waist size.** If you're a woman with a waist measurement of over 35 inches or a man with a waist of over 40 inches, you probably have high inflammation. Whittling a few inches off the waist by reducing your portions and increasing activity can go a long way toward solving that problem.
5. **Get enough sleep.** A new study shows that elderly people with high blood pressure who sleep less than 7.5 hours a night have dramatically elevated chances of having a stroke or heart attack. Other research has shown that both too little and too much sleep increases inflammation. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine says most adults need between seven and eight hours of sleep each night.
6. **Reduce stress.** High levels of stress hormones can lead to the release of excess inflammatory chemicals.