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## Wellbeing to prevent heart disease

Our mothers cooked their leafy veggies, root veggies like potatoes, meat, and fish in boiling water first, and then tempered in a bit of oil other ingredients, such as chili, onion, and curry leaves separately and added to the cooked dish at the end to bring that extra flavor.

This was time consuming, though a very healthy way of eating your food. Heart disease and most other chronic disease like diabetes were less prevalent.

Today, the way of cooking has changed to faster methods by deep frying in oil, sauteing, or stir frying for better taste and flavor, as done in street foods, restaurant, and fast-food chains as a quick and inexpensive way to prepare foods quite unhealthy, but Sri Lankans have got the taste of it and home cooking is fast disappearing.

Such foods may increase your risk of diseases like type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and obesity.

Let us talk about heart disease, that is on the increase in most countries today, including Sri Lanka.

Heart disease is an umbrella term for range of conditions that affect your heart.

Diseases under the heart disease umbrella include blood vessel diseases, such as coronary artery disease; heart rhythm problems (arrhythmias); and heart defects you're born with (congenital heart defects), among others.

One person dies every 36 seconds in the United States from cardiovascular disease.

About 659,000 people in the United States die from heart disease each year—that's 1 in every 4 deaths.

China had the highest number of heart disease deaths last year, followed by India, Russia, the United States, and Indonesia.

Modifiable risk factors (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, obesity, and tobacco) are the main contributing factors to the burden of cardiovascular disease in Indonesia.

The trend of increasing levels of risk factors over time indicates CVD health burden in Indonesia is likely to increase further.

**Mortality from ischemic heart disease in France is about a quarter of that in Britain, but the major risk factors are similar**

**The high consumption of alcohol in France, and of red wine, explains little of the difference**

**French paradox of low incidence of heart rate despite the Western lifestyles and keeping up till late during the weekends, dining and dancing, could not be explained.**

**Today through research studies it is becoming clear why that was.**

**For decades up to 1970, France had lower animal fat consumption (about 21% of total energy consumption v 31% in Britain) and serum cholesterol (5.7 v 6.3 mmol/l), and only between 1970 and 1980 did French values increase to those in Britain. There must be a time lag between the increase in serum cholesterol concentration and the full effect of the resulting increase in coronary artery atheroma and risk of death from ischemic heart disease.**

**This study reveals the importance of keeping your blood cholesterol within the normal range to reduce the risk of heart disease.**

**According to the latest WHO data published in 2018 Coronary Heart Disease Deaths in Sri Lanka reached 28,777 or 22.64% of total deaths. The age adjusted Death Rate is 123.79 per 100,000 of population ranks Sri Lanka #94 in the world.**

**The incidence of heart disease in Sri Lanka, is bound to be high compared to the developed countries, due to non-availability of a health systems where free access is available for checking on routine specific blood tests such as cholesterol, and other relevant investigations as a preventive measure.**

**Such investigations seem to be done when you suffer from heart disease after hospitalization, required for treatment, and not for prevention.**

**There are many other risk factors, that lead to high risk of heart disease in Sri Lanka, though coconut being blamed for its high saturated fatty acids.**

**When you are 40 years and over, eating high dense foods more with meat products and less veggies, junk foods as we refer to is one of the main factors leading to high blood cholesterol and triglycerides, resulting in building of plaques in your coronary blood vessels and elsewhere.**

**Foods that are bad for your heart are:**

**Sugar, Salt, Fat. Over time, high amounts of salt, sugar, saturated fat, and refined carbs raise your risk for a heart attack or stroke. ...**

**Bacon, Red Meat, Soda, Baked Goods, Processed Meats, White Rice, Bread, and Pasta, Pizza.**

**Crash diets can cause an irregular heartbeat.**

**Shane Warne, 52-year-old died from a suspected heart attack, but now, just days after his untimely death, reports suggest that he was on an 'extreme' liquid diet for 14 days, which could have been one of the triggers.**

**Some liquid diets and those that limit calorie intake to the point of starvation are extremely dangerous. Poor nutrition can lead to many health conditions, including arrhythmia, loss of heart muscle mass, and ultimately heart damage.**

**Eating a vegetable based diet daily that includes nutrients and fiber and low calorie fat , and eating meat once a week , and eating more oily fish are more desirable to reduce the risk of coronary plaques that blocks the arteries.**

**Such food also has antioxidants, which may help protect your cells from damage that can lead to diabetes and heart disease.**

**Daily Exercise May cut heart disease risk in older people.**

**Increased levels of physical activity and an active lifestyle appear to be linked to a lower risk of heart disease in later life, a new study suggests.**

**Researchers looked at how different patterns of physical activity are linked with heart disease in older women and men and found that more activity was associated with lower rates of heart conditions and death.**

**The greatest reduction in risk was seen in those who did more than 20 minutes of physical exercise each day and was more pronounced at 70 years of age.**

**"Physical activity is likely to be beneficial at any age, but to summarize our findings, we could say that when it comes to being physically active, the sooner the better," says lead researcher Claudio Barbiellini Amidei, MD, of the University of Padua in Italy.**

**Living a lonely life is bad for the heart as much as smoking, high blood pressure, obesity, or not exercising, and connecting with social friends by joining a club and meeting people seem to reduce the risk of heart disease and other illnesses, including dementia.**

**High blood pressure that occurs due to thickening of your peripheral arteries is a strong risk factor for heart disease, as much strain is enforced on the heart to pump blood to the periphery.**

**When you are 60 and above, it is advisable to check your blood pressure at home, routinely and consult your family doctor for advice if it is above the normal range.**

**You may be having sleep apnea without your knowing. If you feel tired in the morning as you wake up and has a dry mouth by keeping the mouth open during sleep, you need to consult your doctor and get a referral to a specialist who does sleep apnea testing.**

**People with bull necks, and heavy drinking are two common factors that can cause this problem. People who suffer from sleep apnea are more likely to have a stroke, high blood pressure and heart disease.**

**Putting on extra pounds raise your odds for high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes, all linked to heart disease.**

**There is another view that most patients who get heart disease the cholesterol levels are lower than 100 mg/dL, and one study showed that 7.6 percent of patients had LDL levels below 70 mg/dL, which are guideline targets for LDL cholesterol in those at fair risk and at high risk for cardiovascular disease, respectively.**

**A new national study has shown that nearly 75 percent of patients hospitalized for a heart attack had cholesterol levels that would indicate they were not at high risk for a cardiovascular event, based on current national cholesterol guidelines.**

**Dr Malhotra a well-known cardiologist from UK believes that saturated fat which produce high cholesterol levels in the blood, is a part of a healthy diet: he is known to put a tablespoon of butter and coconut oil into his coffee. He has attacked the standard advice on saturated fat consumption to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.**

**He condemns taking statins to lower your cholesterol levels as it is known to trigger a slew of nasty, debilitating side effects including headaches, muscle pain and nausea, and increase the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, hepatitis, pancreatitis and vision problems and memory loss.**

**Niacin or Vitamin B3 is the best agent known to raise blood levels of HDL, which helps remove cholesterol deposits from the artery walls.**

**According to the University of Washington researchers, treatment with statins and niacin reduces risk of heart attacks by 60 to 90 percent, reverses arterial plaque buildup, according to an article in Nov 29 New England Journal of medicine**  
**“This is the first demonstration of a striking clinical benefit from this form of combination drug therapy used in patients with a common type of coronary disease,”**  
**said Dr. B. Greg Brown, lead author of the study, a cardiologist and UW professor of medicine.**

**Hope this video talk in keeping your heart healthy was useful.**

**Stay safe, goodbye for now until we meet again.**