

Homocysteine Is A Killer — B6, B12 & Folic Acid To The Rescue!

Don't worry if you've never heard of it. Homocysteine was a relatively obscure amino acid produced during the normal breakdown of proteins in the body—until Dr. Kilmer McCully suggested a connection between high levels of homocysteine and vascular diseases, including stroke and coronary heart disease.

McCully is better known for his book, *The Homocysteine Revolution*, which posits a causative role of excessive homocysteine levels in arteriosclerosis (fatty deposits in the blood vessel) *and also* that by consuming an optimal diet in abundance of some basic vitamins can reduce the risk of developing this vascular disease.

The chemistry might bore you, but the silent process of homocysteine build-up is one you should take note of. It could save your life! So we'll keep it simple.

The *only* source of this “bad boy” homocysteine, is from another amino acid, methionine, found in dietary proteins. Proteins from animal sources (such as meat, eggs or milk) are abundant in methionine, while plant sources are much more limited in methionine. So, diets high in animal proteins result in increased blood levels of homocysteine.

In addition, McCully argues that the over consumption of highly-refined foods, fats and sugars (that are depleted of natural vitamins) leads to widespread nutritional deficiencies of water-soluble vitamins in the body; in particular, water-soluble B vitamins. B vitamins are the balancing

agents for homocysteine levels. Deficiency in these vitamins leads to a build up of homocysteine.

Research shows that vitamin B12 and folic acid not only convert

dangerous homocysteine into forms that can be excreted in urine, they, along with B6, also protect arteries against the damaging effect of homocysteine through the same conversion process.

Similar to vitamin C, which is water-soluble, the body needs a constant influx of these critical B vitamins, since the body cannot make or store these nutrients.

The homocysteine theory explains why people who over-indulge on meats and animal proteins and don't replenish essential nutrients are susceptible to arteriosclerosis. There are certainly other risk factors, but for pennies per day, why risk another day without ample protection from these basic B vitamins?

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