

# The Truth About Cholesterol

Susan DeLaney, ND



## The Truth About Cholesterol

**Rebekah Kelley:** Welcome to the Humanized podcast, all about personalizing your health. I'm your host Rebekah Kelley, and today Dr. Susan DeLaney will be sharing her expertise on the topic, The Truth About Cholesterol. Remember to access other Humanized Health podcasts, please subscribe and get all the other variety of casts in audio, video and transcription at [HumanizedHealth.com](http://HumanizedHealth.com). I'd also like to thank our lead sponsor, Village Green Apothecary, at [MyVillageGreen.com](http://MyVillageGreen.com).

Now today's guest, Dr. Susan DeLaney, has practiced naturopathic medicine in North Carolina for over three decades. Over the years, she's observed that the health of many people, including children, has greatly declined, while the number of prescriptions has dramatically increased. By using a natural approach to healing, she is able to help people become less dependent on prescription drugs and improve their health and vitality. In her practice as well as her lectures, Dr. DeLaney inspires people using up-to-date nutrition science to take personal responsibility for their own health journey. Dr. DeLaney is passionate about educating individuals and their healthcare providers about the benefits of advanced nutrient therapy for balanced biochemistry, as well as the nutritional value of eating real food and healthy fats. Dr. DeLaney's latest project, Your Health is No big thing, It's a Million Little Things, provides links to 13 educational videos to help people learn more about healthy fats, the importance of fat-soluble vitamins, as well as simple changes individuals can make to improve their health.

Dr. DeLaney, as always, it's such a pleasure to have you here, making us smarter about our health.

**Susan DeLaney:** Thanks. Glad to be here.

**Rebekah Kelley:** So, cholesterol. It's a subject that is very confusing when you listen to a lot of the marketing messages that are out there, at least it seems confusing to me. I know people who don't eat eggs because they have cholesterol. They'll choose chicken, not steak because they have high cholesterol. But yet, I've also heard that cholesterol is really important, especially to children, to build growing bodies, minds. So you're here, help us better understand. What is cholesterol and is it really a bad fat, or a type of bad fat? What's going on?

**Susan DeLaney:** Yeah. So first of all, cholesterol's not a fat, it's a sterol, and you can tell that by the name at the end, it says choleSTEROL. And it's akin to what plants have, phytosterols and plant constituents. And so cholesterol for the cell is really a constituent of the cell wall, and it's not a fat.

So let me show you [holds up a diagram], this is what fats look like. They're long chains of carbons and they have an acid on the end, so they call it fatty acid. This is what cholesterol looks like [holds up a diagram].

**Rebekah Kelley:** Doesn't look anything like the fat.

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**Susan DeLaney:** No. So they're not even distant cousins. These two are not related in any way. So the four rings and then extra carbon chains, but that's it. So it's not a fat in biochemistry. It's more considered a wax-like substance and it has lots of important uses in our body. But number one, it is a key structural component of your cell wall. And I showed that little chart a moment ago, and here it is, the cell membrane, and cholesterol is this bright yellow thing, right here. So that's cholesterol, those little things that help with the structural components. And it makes the cell kind of waxy, so it prevents things from moving in and out that shouldn't. So that's the structural thing of it.

And I just want to say in the beginning that the U.S. Dietary Guidelines have now said, and you can find it on their website, that eating cholesterol in your diet does not change your blood cholesterol whatsoever. So anyone not eating eggs or steak can go, oh, I can eat all the shrimp and eggs that I want because it doesn't change your blood cholesterol. What does is eating sugar and refined carbohydrates. They don't say that on their guidelines.

**Rebekah Kelley:** I've never heard that in marketing materials at all related to cholesterol.

**Susan DeLaney:** It's not in the marketing materials [laughs]. And so one of the things that's really key to know is, people who eat the ketogenic diet, which is eggs and butter and cheese and steak, and some fish and chicken, their cholesterol goes down. It goes way down by eating those foods. That's because they've eliminated carbohydrates and sugars. And people often eating the vegan diet or high carbohydrate refined foods have the highest cholesterol.

And so where did this whole misconception come from? You asked me that question. So there was something called the Framingham Study, from Framingham, Massachusetts, which they started in the '60s. And back in the 1980s or so, they announced that cholesterol was indeed the marker for heart disease. And as you go back and reanalyze that study, which Dr. George Mann did, he said there's no difference in heart disease between people of 205 and 294. So in that same range of cholesterol, exactly the same levels of heart disease, heart attacks and illness.

So that did not make public news, did it? The Framingham Study, the research behind it. And the reason is that medicine uses that as a marker, and then big pharma can use that marker to say, well, this causes heart disease, we can find a drug that will lower it. So it's all tied into the whole medical, industrial, pharmaceutical industry.

But cholesterol does not cause heart disease. And in fact, the women with the highest cholesterol live the longest. And there's science to back that up.

**Rebekah Kelley:** Wow. Wow. [Both laugh.] So cholesterol basically got a bad rap just because it was misunderstood, it sounds like, from the study, and it was just grabbed and used, and it just kind of sounds like it's just gotten repeated, right? It's almost like a rumor that got repeated

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and repeated, and now it's kind of become the truth, unfortunately, even though it's not really... it's just a rumor, right?

**Susan DeLaney:** Right. And so the same with saturated fats and cholesterol, they both got the bad rap, and it's just not true.

**Rebekah Kelley:** It's an ugly rumor.

**Susan DeLaney:** It's an ugly rumor. It's not true. And hopefully it's starting to change a little bit, but not so much.

**Rebekah Kelley:** So can you talk about then, why cholesterol is so vital in our lives? Why it's such a vital nutrient in our lives and, it sounds to me like maybe it's something we need to be rethinking and reevaluating as we think about our health. But can you talk about why it's so vital?

**Susan DeLaney:** Yeah. It has a lot of activity in our bodies. So it is actually an antioxidant in your cell and protects you from getting free radicals, like from cigarette smoke and pollution, bad things that we're eating. It's an antioxidant. People think I'm crazy when I say that, but it's true.

**Rebekah Kelley:** I actually haven't heard that. I haven't heard that, Dr. DeLaney. I actually am ready now to, whenever someone is like, yeah, I can't have those eggs because my cholesterol's too high, to be like, cholesterol is an antioxidant. Did you know that? Because they're not going to believe me, right? It's going to be like one of those things where I'm going to have to take a bet, like I bet you... [laughs]

**Susan DeLaney:** So, and then it's a foundation. Your vitamin D is built on cholesterol. Your bile salts that you need are built on cholesterol. And hormones that regulate your blood sugar, your blood pressure, and your mineral uptake, which you know your adrenals do that. Your sex hormones need cholesterol to be built upon, as well. DHEA, progesterone, estrogen, testosterone. You know, these guys who are needing Viagra, they probably just need some more cholesterol.

For children, it's an essential nutrient for their brain development. Let me say that again. It's an essential nutrient for their brain development. And we're not feeding it to our kids in these formulas, and that is really a problem. And they can get it from breast milk, but a lot of kids are not getting it. Is this contributing to our children's difficulty in learning and in school and violence and their behavior? It's one of the things for sure. And we need to bring cholesterol back. And you'll find the highest concentrations of cholesterol in your brain, in your nervous system, and in your muscles. So that's why when people lower their cholesterol with statins, they start to have aches in their legs and cognitive issues, which is very disconcerting. So you

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need to keep your cholesterol levels up and avoid statins to prevent you from getting cognitive decline.

Another thing that low cholesterol does, if you have it, there are few people that have it really low, like 100, 120, and they actually give cholesterol to these people. It makes you more susceptible to depression, to suicide and to violent behavior. Now, does that sound familiar?

**Rebekah Kelley:** It actually does. Yes. We seem to have kind of a rash of it happening right now, right?

**Susan DeLaney:** Right.

**Rebekah Kelley:** It just seems like there's a little bit of a higher level.

**Susan DeLaney:** Right. And so it also makes people who are older susceptible to having a hemorrhagic stroke. And that's the kind that bleeds. Only 15% of strokes are hemorrhagic strokes. But there is an increase happening in those, and I do believe it's because they're taking statins.

So people say, well, now wait a second, Susan, what about cholesterol and saturated fats causing fatty plaque?

**Rebekah Kelley:** Right? Clogging up your arteries. Yes. Yes. We hear that frequently.

**Susan DeLaney:** So I can't eat that because I'll get clogged arteries. Well, it turns out if you take one of those little fatty plaques out of your heart, it's 74% polyunsaturated fats and only 24% saturated fats. Really interesting, isn't it? When you analyze it, it's not saturated fats that's doing that. And the reason you have a plaque is because there's damage to your arteries and those little fatty acids are coming in to repair it and then the cholesterol sits on top of it and tries to wall it off. So it's acting actually as a repair mechanism, not as the cause of the plaque.

I have a quick little story I want to tell you. So think about you came from outer space and you got a homework assignment that said, okay, go in there and look at Earth and examine what really causes these car accidents. And so you have an assignment to go to a hundred car accidents. And there's red lights there and blue light cars, and there's people lying on the ground, and then there's people crying. There's some people not breathing, some people holding their arms. But every one of these car accidents, they look different, except for those two factors, the blue lights and red lights are always there. So when you do your analysis, you go, well, everything is really different except there's always a blue light and red light there. And that way we think that those cars caused it. But they showed up later to help repair the damage to the cars and help the accident victims, as well. So that's kind of the way we think of a

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cholesterol and saturated fatty acid. They didn't cause it. They showed up to help do the repair. And that's the problem, we can't get rid of that misconception. That is true.

And once again, I want to reiterate this thing about the U.S. Dietary Guidelines, people "telling us what to do" – that cholesterol in your diet does not cause high cholesterol in your blood.

And go ahead and eat those eggs because, number one, not just for children, but those are really important for adults because the yolks contain choline, which is a brain food. So eat those eggs, eat that steak. Does not cause heart disease.

**Rebekah Kelley:** Wow. Thanks, Dr. DeLaney.

**Susan DeLaney:** You're welcome.

**Rebekah Kelley:** I think, certainly for me, I better understand the truth about cholesterol. For more valuable information from Dr. DeLaney, visit [www TheWellnessAlliance.com](http://www.TheWellnessAlliance.com). That's T H E W E L L N E S S A L L I A N C E.com. Let me remind you again, please subscribe and get access to continue to receive all Humanized videos, podcasts and transcriptions from all of our thought leaders like Dr. DeLaney on personalized health at [HumanizedHealth.com](http://HumanizedHealth.com). Thanks for being with us. It's always a pleasure.