



Concerns over Statin Drugs?

It seems it's getting harder and harder to turn on the TV and not see a commercial for a drug being advertised as the "answer" to a health condition. Statin drugs, used to treat high cholesterol, are one such example but are they truly what the companies selling them claim? Kim Thompson (2012) of *Healthy Transformations* in New Hartford, NY was nice enough to talk to the Health Spotlight about some of the real issues behind statin drugs.

How strong is the research suggesting that statin drugs actually prevent heart disease?

Kim: "Research actually indicates that maintaining a healthy lifestyle is the key to heart disease prevention. This includes eating a whole foods diet, getting daily exercise or activity, not smoking, managing stress and limiting alcohol. Stains are simply a "band-aid" to an underlying issue. If statins were the key to managing heart disease, it would not still be the #1 killer of men and women in the U.S."

Do you think statin drugs are over prescribed in America?

Kim: "Like most drugs, yes, I believe statins are overprescribed. From 2000-2005, the number of people taking stains grew 88%! The published numbers recently range from 11-30 million Americans are taking this drug. The National Institute for Health and the CDC both recommend making lifestyle changes first to lower cholesterol and manage heart disease. This includes eating healthy, exercising and managing stress. Unfortunately, the drugs are often the first recommendation."

What are some of the adverse effects of taking statin drugs?

Kim: "The most common nutrient deficiency caused by taking a stain is in CoEnzyme Q10 or CoQ10. This is helpful in gene expression, cell signaling and heart health. Yes, I said heart health and statins are depleting this essential enzyme. Many studies have favored the use of CoQ10 supplementation while taking a statin. However, it is important to know that cholesterol lowering medications do also cause depletions in Vitamin B12, Vitamin E, Vitamin D, Vitamin A, Iron and Vitamin B9."

If someone is taking a statin drug what precautions should they take?

Kim: "You should be aware of side effects that include muscle and joint aches, which is the most common due to the CoQ10 deficiency. Other side effects include nausea, diarrhea or constipation. Long term statins can cause liver damage and muscle problems. You should consider other options before beginning a statin including lifestyle modifications and natural alternatives such as fish oil, plant sterols and CoQ10."

Thank you Kim!

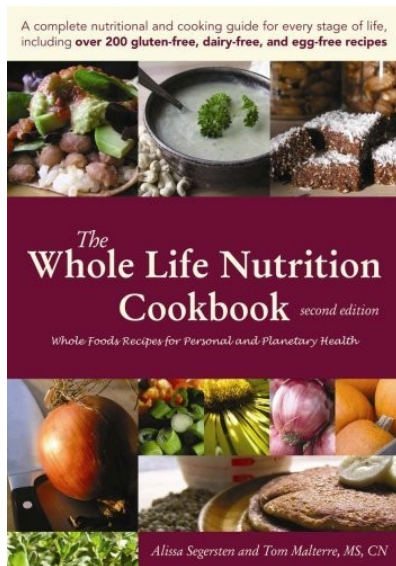


Sources:

Thompson, Kim (2012). Interview. *Healthy Transformations* 3985 Oneida St. Suite 104 New Hartford, NY 13413.

Healthy Transformations Book of the Month: The Whole Life Nutrition Cookbook By Ali and Tom Segersten

This is the first month I have chosen a cookbook. However, it is one of my favorites! All recipes are gluten free and dairy free and absolutely delicious! (I just made the pinto bean and yam soup on pg. 146...to die for!)



-Kim Thompson of *Healthy Transformations*

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