

## **When is high blood pressure a good thing? Part 1.**

The concept I will share with you is not something you have likely heard anywhere else, but it can be critical to your future health. It will take two columns, so don't miss next week's column.

When is high blood pressure a good thing? To answer that question, it is important to understand what causes blood pressure to rise. No it isn't exactly what you are thinking, that high blood pressure is caused by poor diet, lack of exercise and high stress levels. These are important factors, but what causes the pressure to rise, is the body itself.

The body constantly regulates and changes the blood pressure based on its current needs. There are times when the pressure needs to be higher, such as during physical exertion, and there are times when the pressure should be lower such as during sleep. The body chooses its blood pressure based on its immediate needs.

Blood supplies nutrients and oxygen to the cells of the body. Pressure is needed to push the blood through the thousands of miles of blood vessels in order to carry it to the hands and feet and even up hill to the brain.

The pressure necessary to push blood through the blood vessels depends upon the size of the opening within the blood vessels. Years of poor dietary choices and lack of exercise can cause a buildup of gunk on the inside wall of the blood vessels. This buildup decreases the size of the opening of the blood vessels. The smaller the opening, the more pressure is necessary to carry the life giving nutrients and oxygen to the cells.

Your cells need a certain amount of oxygen and nutrients regardless of how difficult it might be to get it there. If the body needs to pump the blood harder to get it to its destination, it will. The body only concerns itself with what it needs today. It doesn't consider what the consequences might be years later.

While high blood pressure might satisfy the immediate needs of the body, chronic high blood pressure can damage the body in the long run. Chronic high blood pressure should be addressed, but the most popular method of controlling high blood pressure in essence robs Peter to pay Paul. Next week I will explain why and what you can do if you suffer with high blood pressure.

## **When is high blood pressure a good thing part 2**

The most popular method of controlling high blood pressure is to treat it with medication. Although everyone recognizes the benefit of improving the diet and exercising more, when it comes to lowering blood pressure, most choose the simpler method of taking medication.

While medication can successfully lower blood pressure, the negative consequences are rarely acknowledged. As I discussed last week, blood pressure is high for a reason. When blood vessels narrow, or when the normally slippery walls of the blood vessels become rough and irregular, it takes more pressure to push the life-giving blood through.

Blood pressure medication works by weakening the heart muscle contraction or by reducing the amount of blood in the body. In other words, they reduce the amount of blood flowing through our blood vessels. In doing so the pressure drops. Unfortunately, when the blood flow reduces, so does the amount of oxygen and nutrients that flow to the body tissues. Any tissue, that receives less than the required amount of blood for an extended period of time,

will degenerate.

Some research has demonstrated that individuals on long-term blood pressure medication have an increase in senile dementia and even Alzheimer's. This only makes sense when you realize that the brain requires more oxygen than most parts of the body and artificially reducing the blood pressure will result in a reduction of oxygen to the brain.

Uncontrolled blood pressure has negative health consequences as well, so I am not suggesting that everyone stop taking blood pressure medication. What I am suggesting is that there are ways to improve the ease at which the blood flows through the vessels, which will reduce the need for the heart to pump the blood as hard. This will lower the blood pressure without any side effects.

Exercise, improved nutrition, supplements, stress reduction, weight loss and even chiropractic care have been shown to reduce blood pressure. Next week I will begin reviewing each of these.