

# How does lifestyle affect the circulatory system



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Circulatory diseases are the most common killers in the western world and this figure will continue to grow, but why; societies new lifestyle has changed a lot over the last 100years and this is the reason. Many factors can be the cause of this genetics, diet, cigarette smoking, high blood pressure, consuming alcohol, lack of exercise, or a combination of some or all of these factors are the main culprits. The heart is a perfect muscle that roughly beats about 100, 000 times every day, pumping about 2, 000 gallons of blood, From this you can see it needs to be in a prime condition all the time and often needs a work out. The population has become very sedentary particularly in Europe and America, this is directly affecting the numbers of people suffering with some form of circulatory illnesses, its clear we must change our life styles and in this essay I will be looking at the main circulatory problems; heart disease, arteriosclerosis, high cholesterol levels and problems linking to and causing these issues like obesity, diabetes, smoking and blood pressure. Cardiovascular deaths are rising compared with other causes of death. Here is some information from the American heart association.

“ For the first time since 1980 in aging men and women. In the USA alone 1. 5 million people have heart attacks every year at a cost of \$51. 6 billion. The American Heart Association’s Heart reports cardiovascular diseases killed 954, 138 in the US in 1993.

Stroke deaths rose to 150, 000. And the number of people treated in the hospital for cardiovascular diseases rose to 5. 7 million.” This graph shows that the death due to heart diseases is lowering and although thousands still die at least we can see medical techniques are getting better. This is due to

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our advancing technology. There are many methods of treating different heart disease, transplant being the most drastic and a simple life style the least.

There are also drug therapies, bypass surgeries, valve replacements, pacemakers and many more. The heart is the central organ of the circulatory system, a muscular pump that continuously forces blood around the body and through the lungs where it takes on oxygen. The blood pumps through to the vena Cava in veins deoxygenated and up through the pulmonary artery to the lungs and then back to the left side of the heart where the blood is pumped through the valves in the heart up into the atrium and then out of the aorta to the rest of the body via arteries to body and brain. There are three vital blood vessels involved in carrying and transferring the blood to the body cells are arteries, veins and capillaries. We have to take care of these vessels as if there is even a small blockage or problem then the framework of the circulatory system could collapse. Heart disease occurs when blood is held back and there are many varieties of heart disease.

Ischemic Heart Disease and Valvular heart disease are the biggest killer and the most common. Valvular Heart Disease affects the valves in the heart. A condition called mitral valve prolapsed affects the valves but not allowing them to shut properly, this means blood is flowing in two directions on one side of the heart, which is called regurgitation of blood. It is generally not a person's lifestyle that causes this defect as it's a genetic disorder. It causes chest pain, shortness of breath, heart palpitations, fainting, and anxiety or panic attacks but rarely death. The opposite to mitral valve prolapsed is mitral valve stenosis.

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This is where the valves have narrow openings making a lot harder for the blood to pass through. Getting bacterial infections and rheumatic fever well as being mainly an inherited disorder can cause this as. Valvular disorders are much more common in women than men some cases up to 71% more females suffer with this condition. But heart attacks are most common in men as its proven that estrogen seems to strength the muscles of the heart therefore mininsing the risk of heart attacks, but once a woman reaches the age of menopause the levels of men and woman suffering heart attacks levels off.

Ischemic heart disease is when anything obstructs the flow of blood to or from the heart. The most common obstruction is atherosclerosis, which is a buildup of fat and calcium on the inside of the walls of the coronary arteries. Atherosclerosis is the most common type of cardiovascular disease and is an ongoing problem that can start at any age. Obstructed arteries can lead to two of the most common heart disorder angina pectoris.

Angina is chest pains in the thorax, which occur when the heart doesn't receive enough blood to do vigorous activities. If the arteries are atherosclerotic then they don't dilate wide enough as they become rigid with the fat deposits, and therefore the person can't get the increased amount of blood the body needs when working out etc. if the atherosclerotic arteries are extremely bad then angina can effect a person even when they are at rest. If an artery that leads to the brain is complete blocked or as cholesterol deposits then the brain gets starved of oxygen, if this happens the person suffers a stroke which if it doesn't kill can leave people with paralising

effects. When coronary arteries get blocked then parts of the heart muscle can die and this causes a heart attack.

For prevention, use animal, dairy and hydrogenated fats, tropical oils, egg yolks and sugars sparingly, and increase the use of vegetables, fruit and whole grains. Heart attacks are the biggest killer in America and the UK. This is caused by a variety of factors again. Genes and gender being two of them but also some external factors like the person's diet. Eating an excess of foods with high fat content, this not only causes heart disease and arteriosclerosis but also obesity, which puts massive strain on the heart.

Eating fat foods gives you a high cholesterol level. Having a high cholesterol level is the worst possible thing you could do to your heart. Having high cholesterol levels means that your body is taking in more fats and carbohydrates than your body needs and so it stores it. This builds up as a fatty cholesterol deposit on the arteries and heart, this as I said before is called arteriosclerosis and this in turn causes the heart diseases of the heart valves and blockages stopping blood flow, which if left without treatment causes serious heart attacks and can kill.

If your alcohol consumption exceeds one or two drinks a day, you can raise your blood pressure and increase the levels of fatty in your blood stream. Having a high blood pressure, which is also called hypertension, can lead to you getting a heart attack. As if you have high blood pressure the heart is working very hard to push the blood around the body, which is usually because of blocked and arteriosclerosis arteries. Continuously having the heart work so hard puts added strain on it, also if the pressure builds up in

one of the blood vessels then they can break and this causes serious damage to the person. This diagram shows the different methods of trying to cure and prevent all these circulatory diseases.

The lifestyle method is more effective in prevention and therefore everyone should know how to live healthy if the government want to improve public health and rise life expectancy levels. Not drinking and smoking are two of the first thing a person must do. As I have said drinking rises blood pressure which if you have even minor arteriosclerosis can case even more problems. Smoking not only gives people problems in their respirtory system but also causes tar to build up in ateries which again makes it hard for the heart to pump blood around the body. Secondly people must start to eat healthier, cutting down on fatty high cholesterol foods and eating more of a balanced diet.

This means you will have a healthy strong heart and also means that arteriosclerosis will be reduced to minimal risk. If you eat a balanced diet and keep to your personal ideal weight then your heart has less strain, being obese puts enormous strain on the heart as this excess fat in also on the insides of arteries and its harder for us to live a normal life. Although there are heart diseases, which are hereditary, having this balanced diet and healthy lifestyle along with garlic and other vitamins that strengthen the heart reduces the risk and if you are to gain one of these diseases then you will be in a healthier state to fight against it. The stereotype of a person that is most likely to get heart disease of some type is a middle aged man or woman (older for women) that suffers from obesity, smokes heavily, drinks

more than 2 alcoholic drinks a day, this would cause high blood pressure and has a history of heart problem in his family.