

What Has Dr. Shook Been Reading?

Stop Inflammation NOW! A Step-by-Step Plan to prevent, treat and Reverse Inflammation – the Leading Cause of Heart Disease and Related Conditions.

By Richard M. Fleming, M.D. with Tom Monte

Putnam 2004

Stop Inflammation NOW! Explains the relationship between diet, exercise, the workings of our immune system, the inflammatory response and our cardiovascular health. It points to a diet rich in calories and a sedentary lifestyle as the primary cause of heart disease, obesity, diabetes, osteoporosis and cancer.

Dr. Fleming, a nuclear cardiologist and research scientist, discusses at length how a diet of processed foods - - foods loaded with fat, flour and sugar -- a diet rich with animal fat and protein – causes our immune system to respond, kicking off a whole slew of physiological events leading to inflammation and disease within our arteries and heart (early heart disease). Eventually fat filled, bacteria ridden crust forms within the arteries (advanced heart disease). A chunk breaks off and -- whoops -- heart attack or stroke.

Stop Inflammation NOW!, discusses “12 essential risk factors” that can result in an inflammatory reaction which damages arteries and the heart. These risk factors include, elevated cholesterol (“good” and “bad”), elevated triglycerides (fat), excess weight, too little exercise, too few antioxidants in the diet (found in vegetables and fruits), and other factors like fibrogen, growth factors, cytokines and leukotrienes, complement (a protein produced by the immune system), bacteria (cholesterol plaques are filled with bacteria) and invasive surgical procedures that damage arteries.

The technical and medical jargon flows freely with sufficient repetition and simple visualization to give the reader a basic understanding of cardiovascular function and the inflammatory process.

Dr. Fleming explains various diagnostic methods, drugs and surgical procedures commonly used to detect and treat heart disease. Dr. Fleming goes on to explain how even the best of drugs and surgery cannot CURE heart disease, only diet and exercise (under a doctors supervision) will do that.

What will prevent or cure heart disease? Why Phase 1 of the” *Fleming Stop INFLAMATION NOW! Program*”, of course. A diet and exercise program designed for weight loss and the reduction of the “12 essential risk factors”. A low calorie, high fiber diet consisting mostly of vegetables and fruits. Walking is the recommended exercise. Phase 2 of the “*Fleming Stop INFLAMATION NOW! Program*” is more of a maintenance program, which allows for some animal foods and whole grains with an exercise program that is more diverse.

The message of *Stop Inflammation NOW!* is this: Inflammation is the primary cause of heart disease Your diet and exercise habits directly affect the inflammation within your body and are effective tools for preventing or reversing heart disease.

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