

Congestive Heart Failure: Nutrition, Infection, Drugs, and Environmental Failure

By Simon Yu MD

Well over 5 million Americans are suffering from congestive heart failure (CHF). Shortness of breath, fatigue and edema (excessive accumulation of fluid in tissues, cells, or body cavities) are some of the most common symptoms associated with congestive heart failure. Coronary artery disease, heart attack, hypertension, advanced age, and cardiomyopathy (a disease or disorder of the heart muscle, especially of unknown cause) are the most well known causes for CHF. There are also many overlooked areas especially from nutritional deficiency, hidden infections, heavy metals and side effects of drugs. The incidence of CHF has been steadily increasing for the last 20 years.

At the same time, about 20 years ago, there started a massive scientific hysteria of the danger of cholesterol as the main cause of heart disease. "Statin" (HMG-co A reductase) drugs were introduced to lower cholesterol to protect the heart. Everybody believed that a "high" cholesterol level is bad for you. Statin drugs became a multi-billion dollar cash cow for pharmaceutical companies and kept medical doctors and hospitals busy with a new mission: lower your patient's cholesterol level for the prevention of heart attack.

Liver and muscle damage are one of the most common side effects of "statin" drugs. The heart is a specialized muscle organ which is very sensitive to "statin" drugs and requires close monitoring with a blood test. A whole list of "statin" drugs became new suspects for the cause of heart failure. I recommend tapering off these medicines as soon as possible or adding a high dose of Co-Q10 to counteract the side effects of the medication.

I said "scientific hysteria" because every 10 to 20 years, a new fad medical condition pops up with a new "scientific" solution. A new medicine by the pharmaceutical companies arrives "just in time" for this newly recognized disease. These new public awareness medical conditions include osteoporosis, ADD/ADHD, Fibromyalgia, Autism, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, and Obesity. The main stream medical treatment focuses on a diagnosis and treatment plan based on pharmaceutical therapies.

The art of nutrition, detoxification and preventive medicine have been lost under the above scenario that repeats time and time again. Often, so-called "scientific studies" are conducted by "objective" and "highly respected" medical academic institutions and sponsored by pharmaceutical giants. These same pharmaceutical companies then create a momentum within the medical and public arenas through continuing medical education and vast public marketing activities.

If you are suffering from congestive heart failure, you should consider that your medication such as "statin" drugs might be contributing to your problem. A high cholesterol level alone is not the cause of your heart problem. Look for other risk factors such as homocysteine level, C-reactive protein, lipoprotein (a), nutritional status and your HDL ("good") vs. LDL ("bad") cholesterol ratio.

Most heart disease is preventable. It is actually very often associated with nutritional deficiency especially of B-complex vitamins such as thiamine, niacin, folate, and B-12, along with vitamins C and E, selenium, and essential fatty acids. Other important heart nutrients include Co-Q10, L-carnitine, L-lysine and L-taurine. Eating more raw food and adding specific nutritional supplements can reverse much of the advanced congestive heart failure that's occurring.

Undetected infections such as from viruses, mycoplasma, and Chlamydia must also be addressed. In addition, parasites such as heart worm and hidden dental infections should be considered. Environmental

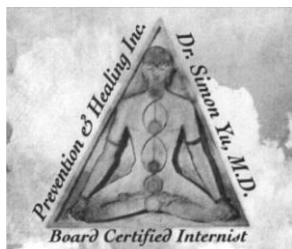
toxins especially heavy metal toxicity has also been associated with CHF. Heavy metals respond very well to chelation therapy to eliminate them from the body. The effects of parasites, heavy metals and hidden dental infections are extensively described on my web site at www.preventionandhealing.com.

Treatment has been essentially limited to medications for traditional medical care. Few other options are made available to conventional medical doctors. In an extreme measure, heart transplantation is performed. However, most heart disease responds to nutritional therapy. First and foremost, prevention and healing of the heart should be considered before trying any medications to relieve the symptoms of congestive heart failure.

As an example, Elsa, a 79 year old woman came to see me about 15 years ago with congestive heart failure, shortness of breath, chronic atrial fibrillation and an ejection fraction of 25%. Typically, patients with severe congestive heart failure like Elsa die within one year. She was started on a nutritional program, dental work was done to clean out infections, chelating therapy was utilized and she took a high dose of Co-Q10. She has been functionally active until recently without a sign of congestive heart failure.

Before adding a new medication, think of feeding your heart with whole foods and nutritional supplements along with chelation therapy for detoxifying a heavy metal burden. Congestive heart failure is a reversible condition if you correct the underlying problems.

Dr. Simon Yu, M.D. is a Board Certified Internist. He practices Internal Medicine with an emphasis on Alternative Medicine to use the best each has to offer. For more articles and information about alternative medicine as well as patient success stories visit his web site at www.preventionandhealing.com or call Prevention and Healing, Inc., 314-432-7802. You can also attend a free monthly discussion on Alternative Medicine at Prevention and Healing on the second Tuesday each month at 6:30 pm. Please call to verify the date and reserve your space.



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