



Two big MYTHS about cholesterol

And four TRUE heart disease risk factors

Let's talk about **cholesterol**.

The terms “good” and “bad” cholesterol get thrown around like confetti.

And you've heard over and over and OVER that **too much** cholesterol is bad for your heart.

But what you *don't* tend to hear (except from me) is that all of that “too much” talk is total hogwash...

Cholesterol *isn't* the enemy it's been made out to be by big pharma.

In fact, it can be quite PROTECTIVE to your heart—especially as you age.

So, allow me to dispel two of the greatest cholesterol MYTHS that continue to circulate.

Then, I'll explain what you *really* need to do to help protect your heart and lower your risk of cardiovascular disease—cholesterol levels aside.

Myth No. 1: Cholesterol is bad for your heart

Cholesterol is one of the most important—yet misunderstood—molecules in the body.

It's a waxy substance that's carried in your blood. And it's essential for the function of *every* cell in your body and brain. (It's so vital to our health and development that human breast milk contains significant quantities of it.)

It's manufactured in animal, human,

and some plant cells. Major food sources include the saturated fat in meat, eggs, and dairy.

Of course, for decades, mainstream medicine tried to blame heart disease on cholesterol...and on foods that contain cholesterol.

But, dating back to the early 1980s, scientists have found *no association* between consuming saturated fats in the diet and cholesterol levels in the blood.

Plus, studies going back to 2010 have repeatedly found *no link* between saturated fat and heart disease.

One analysis of 21 studies involving nearly 350,000 people found that saturated fat was NOT associated with an increased risk of heart disease, stroke, or cardiovascular disease.¹

Another analysis of 32 studies involving more than half a million men and women found no link between *any* type of fat consumption and cardiovascular disease.

The authors concluded: “Current evidence does not clearly support cardiovascular guidelines that encourage high consumption of polyunsaturated fatty acids and low consumption of total saturated fats.”²

Meanwhile, a new review of 18 studies involving more than 40,000 participants found that the saturated fats that naturally occur in dairy

products may actually *reduce* your heart disease risk.³

And a new 15-year study of nearly 10,000 women ages 50 to 55 found that consuming more saturated fat *decreased* their risk of heart disease AND their rates of obesity, type 2 diabetes, and high blood pressure.⁴

So, to summarize, consuming the cholesterol naturally found in animal and plant fats *doesn't* increase your blood levels of cholesterol...and *doesn't* increase your risk of heart disease.

In fact, it might even LOWER your risk!

Now, because I'm sure you're wondering, doesn't saturated fat raise the levels of “bad” LDL cholesterol in your blood? And doesn't *that* lead

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to heart disease?

ABSOLUTELY NOT!

And that leads me to the second myth about “bad” LDL cholesterol...

Myth No. 2: HDL and LDL are “good” and “bad” for you

To debunk this myth, it’s helpful to look at how cholesterol functions in your body.

Fats or lipids like cholesterol aren’t soluble in your blood, so they’re carried into your cells bound to a protein (imagine microscopic boats ferrying the cargo of cholesterol through the blood).

This combo is known as a lipid-protein, or lipoprotein.

Lipoproteins are characterized as low-density lipoprotein (LDL) and high-density lipoprotein (HDL).

What makes a lipoprotein carrying cholesterol (or any other fat or lipid) “high” density is that it has a higher weight—or a lower weight in the case of LDL.

But—and this is KEY—cholesterol *doesn’t* change its molecular characteristics based upon whether it’s carried in the blood by low- or high-density lipoproteins.

Still, that didn’t stop some so-called “experts” from inventing the concept that one type of lipoprotein is “good” and the other is “bad” when the “cholesterol causes heart disease” myth first began falling apart.

Supposedly, these “experts” say that, saturated fat raises LDL “bad” cholesterol. And it’s “bad” because it *raises* the risk of heart disease.

In the same breath, they determined that lowering LDL cholesterol and/or raising “good” HDL cholesterol *saves lives* from heart disease.

But... there’s really no such thing as “good” or “bad” cholesterol. The entire concept is based on flawed science and faulty reasoning.

Indeed, how can one type of cholesterol be “good” and the other “bad” when HDL and LDL cholesterol are exactly the same molecule?

In fact, a number of studies have shown *no reduction* in heart disease mortality (death) for people who successfully lowered “bad” LDL cholesterol. Nor do studies show a benefit to increasing “good” HDL cholesterol.

One recent review of 39 large studies of drugs designed to increase HDL levels found that boosting HDL had NO BENEFIT on all-cause mortality, heart disease mortality, or the likelihood of having a stroke.

The authors were particularly critical of statins, noting that these poisonous pharmaceuticals “do not show an added benefit of trying to bump HDL levels.”⁵

Lesser-known heart disease risk factors

Of course, all of this doesn’t mean that cholesterol doesn’t factor into heart disease. It’s just not the most important factor.

After all, when a lipoprotein in the blood encounters a wall of an artery, things can happen.

A particle of LDL that’s inflamed or oxidized can bind to the interior of the artery wall where it doesn’t belong, and cholesterol can be released. This occurrence can be part of a long process that eventually contributes to formation of a plaque in the artery.

(This is known as arteriosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries. In the arteries of the heart, this is called

coronary artery disease, or heart disease).

Also, a molecule (often LDL) can break into a damaged or dysfunctional section of the artery wall. Once there's a breach, other cholesterol molecules can invade and accumulate.

This causes oxidation and a full cascade of inflammatory responses—which is much more important in terms of heart disease than the cholesterol carried by the damaged lipoprotein spilling out into the artery.

In other words, cholesterol is a consequence, not a cause, of the oxidation and inflammation that damages blood vessels and leads to heart disease.

In fact, it's been said that blaming cholesterol for heart disease is like blaming firefighters for a fire. Firefighters come to the scene of the fire, but are not the cause of it.

Other, TRUE causes (of damage to the artery walls that can lead to heart disease) fall into four key categories:

1.) High levels of homocysteine.

Your body needs this naturally occurring amino acid to make protein. But too much homocysteine can lead to heart disease.

Vitamins B6, B12, and folic acid (B9) help remove excess homocysteine from your blood. So, ask your doctor to test your levels. If they're elevated, supplement with a high-quality vitamin B complex.

2.) High blood sugar and diabetes.

Both of these conditions can damage blood vessels, which is the leading cause of cardiometabolic heart disease. Following a healthy, balanced diet full of fresh, whole foods is a great way to manage blood sugar.

3.) High blood pressure.

Unlike high cholesterol, high blood pressure is one of the main culprits behind heart disease. And one of the best ways to lower your blood pressure is to reduce inflammation. Which leads me to the final factor behind heart disease...

4.) Inflammation. Increased inflammation in the blood can be measured by a CRP (C-reactive protein) test. If it turns out you have high inflammatory markers, you can successfully lower your inflammation with diet and lifestyle changes.

Eating a Mediterranean diet rich in fruits, vegetables, seafood, meat (especially lamb), nuts, seeds, and olive oil has been shown in numerous studies to lower inflammation. (You'll also want to avoid sugar and processed foods.)


And just 140 to 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week (not per day!) can substantially lower inflammation.

This type of activity can include walking, swimming, housework, gardening, or anything you enjoy doing (especially outside, in Nature, which has its own health benefits).

Bottom line? When it comes to slashing your risk of heart disease, forget hyper-focusing on your cholesterol numbers.

And definitely forget the cholesterol-lowering drugs. They don't address the *real* issues, and can actually create more health problems!

Instead, there are many natural, non-drug approaches to preventing and reversing heart disease, as I outline in detail in my *Heart Attack Prevention & Repair Protocol*.

To learn more, or to enroll today, click here or call 1-866-747-9421 and ask for order code EOV3YA00. 

The SURPRISING link between cholesterol and COVID-19

An interesting new meta-analysis of 22 studies showed that people who were hospitalized or died from COVID-19 had **significantly lower cholesterol levels** than those who had milder versions of the disease.

The studies involved a total of about 10,000 people who had COVID between January 2020 and January 2021.⁶

Plus, another article published in 2021 discussed five other studies showing substantially lower HDL and LDL cholesterol, along with triglycerides, in men and women diagnosed with COVID (both severe and mild cases).⁷

Authors of the various studies aren't sure why there's a link between COVID and cholesterol.

The meta-analysis noted that cholesterol might be necessary to help synthesize a substance in the lungs that helps fight viral infections.

And another study postulated that HDL cholesterol might be involved in the regulation of immune cells that fight off COVID infections.

Despite these findings, some researchers and doctors are still pushing statins for people who are testing positive for COVID.

They just can't give up their unhealthy fixation with these dangerous drugs—even when there's evidence that you may actually NEED cholesterol to help fight this persistent disease!

So, heed my warning: Don't fall victim to their statin-scheme. Instead, take some practical steps RIGHT NOW to naturally support your heart *and* your immune system, like supplementing daily with 250 mcg (10,000 IU) of vitamin D.

Seemingly innocuous habit has SERIOUS health consequences?

Beware of this hidden addiction!

We often hear about addictions to recreational and pharmaceutical drugs.

But there's another stealthy addiction that's becoming more and more prevalent.

Recent research shows it's common across ALL ages—and the health consequences are DIRE.

In fact, some studies have found this seemingly innocuous habit can affect your brain in much the same way recreational drugs do—by stimulating production of the feel-good hormone dopamine.¹

And since the human brain is quite literally wired to seek out ways to release dopamine, many “users” get caught in an abusive pattern.

But that's BAD NEWS for your health.

Here's how you can STOP this habit from “re-wiring” your brain...and what you can opt for instead.

Your body and brain on “drugs”

We know about the consequences of drug addiction. But less is known about **addiction to sugary drinks**, like soda.

Sure, it's no secret that drinking too much soda can lead to weight gain. And the excess sugar is definitely *not* what your dentist ordered.

Not to mention, soft drinks contain NO essential nutrients—just sugar, excess calories, and, in many cases, artificial ingredients.

Yet some people—whether they're

addicted or not—feel the pleasures of sugary sodas outweigh the consequences. Well... not quite.

Research reveals that consuming *any amount* of soft drinks can lead to DIRE health consequences. Here's an examination of the evidence, from (literally) head to toe.

Oral health. The problems with consuming sugary drinks commence as soon as they enter your mouth.

Soft drinks contain carbonic and phosphoric acid, which, not surprisingly, create an acidic environment in your mouth that contributes to tooth decay. Sugar also supports harmful bacteria that grow in the mouth.

Dementia. Research shows that *any* incremental increases in blood sugar are strongly associated with increased dementia risk. And sugary drinks lead to rapid blood sugar spikes.

Plus, excess sugar consumption can have a metabolic effect in the body, which can lead to diseases like Type II diabetes. In fact, I often refer to dementia as “Type III diabetes” because of its metabolic impact.

Weight gain. The added sugar in soft drinks is typically in the form of high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS). And research shows this artificial sugar influences a weight-related hormone called leptin.

Leptin is produced by your body's fat cells to regulate the number of calories they consume and burn. Your body's leptin levels change in response to both hunger or

starvation—and to obesity.

As with other metabolic hormones, such as insulin, the body can become resistant to leptin. And leptin resistance is now thought to be among the leading causes of weight gain.

Some experimental studies indicate that intake of the sugar found in soft drinks leads to leptin resistance.

In one study, lab rats became leptin-resistant after being fed large amounts of HFCS.² But, interestingly, when the rats returned to a sugar-free diet, their leptin resistance disappeared.

Heart disease. Recent studies indicate a strong association between sugary drinks and heart disease risk—potentially due to the drinks' ability to increase blood pressure and triglyceride levels.

One 22-year study of more than

The harmful effects of artificial sweeteners

Researchers believe these fake sugars may actually increase real sugar cravings and promote the consumption of sugary beverages and foods. They also think artificial sweeteners can affect you psychologically, filling you with the false notion you can overindulge.

Other researchers suggest that the taste of artificial sweeteners may confuse your metabolism so much that it alters the way your body handles real sugar. Artificial sweeteners may also affect healthy bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract, leading to problems with how your system behaves metabolically.

40,000 men found that those who drank just one sugary drink per day had a 20 percent higher risk of having a heart attack or dying from heart disease, compared to men who rarely consumed sugary drinks.³

And this was even *after* the researchers adjusted for heart disease risk factors (like age, physical activity levels, diet quality, and body mass index). Meaning that you could be in wonderful health but still substantially increase your risk of a heart attack simply by drinking sugary sodas!

Cancer. Sugary drinks are frequently associated with a higher risk of certain cancers.

For example, one 14-year study on more than 60,000 adults found that those who drank just two or more sugary drinks per week were a whopping 87 percent more likely to develop pancreatic cancer compared to those didn't drink soda. The researchers also noted a link between sugary drinks and insulin resistance.⁴

Sugary soda consumption has also been associated with a greater risk of colon cancer. And some research shows that postmenopausal women who drink them may be at greater risk for endometrial (uterus lining) cancer.

Tasty, refreshing alternatives

It's clear that drinking soft drinks has detrimental effects on your health.

So, what should you drink instead? **Water**, or course, is your best option—particularly natural mineral waters bottled at the source in glass. I also recommend **black coffee or tea**.

Of course, sometimes you just have a taste for something sweet. But whatever you do, *don't* make the mistake of thinking artificially sweetened soft drinks are better for you than their sugary counterparts.


One review of 37 studies involving nearly 407,000 people found that those who used artificial sweeteners didn't lose weight—in fact, they actually **GAINED** extra pounds!

Plus, they had a 14 percent higher risk of developing Type II diabetes and a 32 percent higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease.⁵

(Learn more about why artificial sweeteners are so unhealthy in the sidebar on page 4.)

Instead, you can indulge your sweet tooth and quench your thirst with **fruit-infused water**.

This time of year, I also like **hot mulled cider**.

It reminds me of the New England of my childhood, when autumn had a special flavor. And as an adult, I've found that as the autumn sun goes down and the day wanes, gatherings with friends and family can be enhanced with the right "spirit." 

Hot mulled cider

Here's my favorite recipe for a nippy fall night, courtesy of *The Fresh Honey Cookbook: 84 Recipes from a Beekeeper's Kitchen* by Laurey Masterton.

Ingredients:

- 1 gallon apple cider (organic)
- 1 orange, unpeeled, cut into slices
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- ¼ cup whole cloves
- ¼ cup honey (you can use a flavored honey like orange blossom or cranberry if you'd like)
- 1 cup sherry

Directions:

Combine the cider, honey, cinnamon, cloves, and orange slices in a large pot. Bring the mixture to a boil, then immediately reduce to low heat. Simmer for an hour, then add the sherry. You can also garnish your cider with fresh cranberries—or even sprinkle some ground cinnamon on top (see page 8).

Should you give in to those powerful food cravings?

Learn what your body is trying to tell you

We all know what it's like to crave a certain food. Often, the cravings are **STRONG**...and not necessarily for something *healthy*. (I mean, when is the last time you craved broccoli?)

Sometimes, as I discuss on page 4,

your food or drink cravings can be **SO** powerful that they turn into an addiction. But most of us suffer from cravings that are much subtler.

Either way, do you ever wonder what they mean? Let's talk about it...

The anatomy of cravings

Psychologists tend to group food cravings into two categories: physical and psychological.

Physical cravings usually occur when your body is *instinctively*

trying to heal itself or add missing nutrients.

For instance, you might crave oranges when you have a cold because your immune system requires the extra vitamin C to fight the virus.

Indeed, the body is a miraculous thing, built to know *exactly* what it needs for optimal function. And it sends signals to your brain telling you what to eat for nourishment. Often, your brain interprets those signals as cravings.

Psychological cravings have to do more with emotions, thoughts, or experiences you attach to food.

For instance, you may crave *pasta fagioli* when you miss your Italian grandmother, or ice cream when you reminisce about your college sweetheart.

These cravings may be of questionable nutritional value, but incalculable for your mental and emotional well-being. The key is to figure out what you're *really* yearning for, and if food will *truly* fulfill that.

Because often, it won't. And the craving can be replaced with a healthier option like taking a walk... talking with a friend...or meditating on your feelings.

Now, the answer to physical cravings tends to be more straightforward. But here's what some of the most common food cravings may be trying to tell your body...and what you can do about them.

Four common cravings—deciphered

Chocolate. Interestingly, the American Chemical Society reports that chocolate contains the cannabinoid molecule *anandamide*—which may actually create cravings.¹

Cannabinoids, of course, are found in marijuana. But many other plants also contain these natural chemicals, which have been shown in some studies to help reduce pain and induce euphoria (plus other less positive effects).

There are cannabinoid receptors located throughout the human body. So, chocolate cravings may be your body and brain's way of saying you need this healthy food.

For instance, chocolate is rich in magnesium, zinc, and a type of plant antioxidant called flavanols. Both minerals are vital for heart function. And several studies have found that chocolate flavanols reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease by improving blood circulation to your heart and brain.

Flavanols have also been shown to improve brain health and cognitive function. Plenty of research shows that eating chocolate naturally boosts levels of the feel-good chemicals serotonin and dopamine.

Plus, other research shows that this sweet treat may decrease your stress hormones.

So, if you have a chocolate craving, go ahead and indulge...without guilt.

Just make sure the chocolate you choose has **at least 70 percent cacao**, which has more of the beneficial ingredients and less of the added sugar and fats. And don't overdo it—you can get all of chocolate's health benefits by eating just 1 to 2 ounces a day (about 1 to 2 squares).

If you're having *repeated* chocolate cravings, make sure you're getting sufficient minerals like magnesium (400 mg daily) and zinc (40 mg daily).

Burgers or steak. Craving red meat may also signal a mineral deficiency.

Meat is high in iron, selenium, magnesium, calcium, and other essential minerals.

Meat cravings may also suggest you're not getting enough complete protein in your diet.

“Complete” protein contains all of the amino acids essential for human nutrition and health. Some of these amino acids are missing from plant sources, so if you eat a vegetarian diet, you may not be consuming adequate levels of protein.

Of course, you can get some protein, as well as minerals, from plant sources such as beans, dried fruit, nuts, seeds, and whole grains. Plus, taking 250 mg of vitamin C twice daily can increase absorption of iron from these non-meat foods.

In any case, you need to get your iron (and calcium) from food—not supplements. Calcium and iron supplements are downright dangerous for your health, as I often report.

So if you find yourself craving a burger or steak, fire up the grill and get the nutrients you need straight from the source.

Salty snacks. With all of the unscientific salt restrictions being pushed by the government and its co-dependent consumer health groups, you may have fallen victim to a “low-salt” diet.

But as I just wrote in July's issue of *Insiders' Cures*...don't believe the hype. Your body **NEEDS** salt. So, this is one craving that's as straightforward as they come.

Studies have shown that cutting salt is not a solution for high blood pressure or heart disease for most people. In fact, as I've reported before, researchers have found that *a lack of salt* can actually create cardiovascular and metabolic problems.

And that's not all. An interesting research review reported that salt deficiency can result in a condition called anhedonia—which occurs when you can't get any joy or pleasure from activities that normally make you happy.²

Anhedonia is one of the main symptoms of major depressive disorder. (So even if you're not craving it, consider boosting your salt intake if you're having mood issues.)

The question, of course, is how much salt should you eat, and from where?

The government's puny and dangerous recommendation of 2,300 mg a day isn't nearly enough. I think you can go as high as 4,000 mg a day (nearly 2 teaspoons). As I've noted before, Koreans routinely eat this much salt—and they have some of the world's lowest rates of high blood pressure and heart disease.

But make sure that salt isn't from chips, crackers, or other packaged, junk foods. Instead, try a handful of

salted nuts or seeds (pumpkin seeds are a great choice this time of year). Both are highly nutritious and great for your health.

And don't be afraid to add salt (in moderation) to vegetables, meat, or other healthy foods when you're having a craving. Dark chocolate with sea salt may even satisfy two cravings in one!

In fact, I recommend sea salt, which, unlike regular table salt, has minimal processing. Plus, sea salt has trace amounts of calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium, and zinc.

Sweet treats. A simple premise is that if you're craving cookies, candy, or other sugary substances, your blood sugar may be low.

But indulging in desserts can make your blood sugar spike—and then plummet. That can lead to Type II diabetes, obesity, and other serious diseases.


A better solution is to eat at least two

servings a day of whole, fresh fruit.

Not only does fruit contain the natural sugar fructose, but it also has fiber—which helps your body absorb the fructose more slowly, without the spikes associated with the cane sugar found in many sugary foods and beverages. And, of course, fruits contain a wide range of nutrients.

But if your sugar cravings are frequent and fruit doesn't satisfy them, consider seeing your doctor to be evaluated for possible diabetes or an endocrine disorder like polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS).

The bottom line is that your body is constantly communicating with you. And food cravings are just one example.

So, pay attention to what your brain and body are telling you. "Giving in" to your cravings *in a healthy way* can help keep you well-nourished... and physically and psychologically satisfied. 

Little green nut prevents "code red" health alerts

You know I'm "nuts" about the health benefits of, well, nuts.

In fact, study after study shows that just a handful a day of tree nuts (like almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, pecans, and walnuts) can substantially lower your risk of many chronic diseases.

But there's not as much research on the health benefits of **pistachios**.

These delicious (and colorful!) nuts tend to be less popular than others because they are perceived as high in fat, costly, or too difficult to shell and eat.

And that's a pity because a new research review reports that this little

green nut actually has *more nutrients* than many of the other tree nuts.¹

The authors say pistachios are an excellent source of monounsaturated fatty acids (the so-called "good" fats), protein, and fiber. They gush about pistachios' "remarkable" mineral content, especially potassium. And they note that pistachios are an excellent source of vitamins C and E.

And that's not all! The review states that pistachios are also rich in disease-fighting phytochemicals like tocopherols, carotenoids, and phenolic compounds.

Plus, the research tends to concentrate on how these little green nuts can prevent "code red" health alerts...

A handful a day keeps the doctor away?

One serving of pistachios (about 50 nuts) has been shown in studies to lower your risk of the following serious health conditions:

Heart disease. Pistachios are richer than most other nuts in antioxidants, which can substantially lower your heart disease risk. Their essential fatty acid and fiber content also make them a heart-healthy snack.

Research shows that one way

pistachios help protect against heart disease is by lowering your blood pressure (BP).

In fact, one review of 21 studies shows that people who ate pistachios reduced their systolic BP (top number) by about 2 points, and their diastolic BP (bottom number) by about 1 point, compared to those who didn't eat pistachios.²

Other research shows this blood-pressure effect may be at least partly due to an amino acid in pistachios that helps promote blood-vessel health.

Obesity and weight gain. Fifty pistachios only contain about 150

calories, making these tasty nuts a good snack for weight management.

Plus, the fiber and protein in pistachios make you feel *fuller* for longer—called “satiety.” And having to shell pistachios makes you more mindful of your snacking—meaning you're less likely to pop them in your mouth by the (high-calorie) handful.


Indeed, one 24-week study of 60 overweight men and women found that the people who ate more pistachios lost over half an inch on their waistlines compared to non-pistachio eaters.³

Blood sugar management. Research shows that pistachios can help you

avoid the blood sugar spikes that can contribute to Type II diabetes.

In fact, one study found that people with type II diabetes had a 9 percent reduction in their fasting blood sugar after eating pistachios as a snack.⁴

Bottom line: There's a reason why pistachios have been a part of people's diets since ancient times.

After all, while our ancestors may not have known about the health benefits of these unique nuts, chances are they appreciated the taste just as much as we do. 

Citations for all articles available online at www.DrMicozzi.com

Spice of the month: Cinnamon

This time of year we see, smell, and taste cinnamon as a key ingredient in those ubiquitous “pumpkin spice” drinks.

But cinnamon has many more benefits than being part of trendy, seasonal concoctions. Not only does this spice's taste and aroma have a “feel-good” aspect year-round, but cinnamon also has some distinct health benefits. I'll outline a few in just a moment. But first, some history...

Cinnamon grows naturally in the Spice Islands of Southeast Asia (which explains its nickname “gift from the East”).

Arabs discovered it as early as 2000 BC. During the Middle Ages, they brought it to Europe in limited supply. And it soon became a symbol of wealth, as it was so precious and difficult to come by.

Over the years, cinnamon anchored the spice trade in historic civilizations in Africa, Asia, and Europe. It even helped establish early American ports—such as Boston and Baltimore—as economic powerhouses in the New World.

The most common form of cinnamon comes from the bark of the *Cinnamomum cassia* tree.

The dried bark curls up into the characteristic curlicue of a cinnamon “stick,” which you can enjoy in seasonal drinks like a hot toddy. The stick can also be ground into dried cinnamon powder, which is found in just about every kitchen in America.

Of course, cinnamon has many non-culinary uses as well. In fact, it's increasingly found in dietary supplements to help boost health.

Research shows cinnamon **blocks inflammation-promoting compounds** in the body. And we all know that inflammation is the No. 1 root cause behind many chronic diseases.

Plus, studies show cinnamon can help:

- Lower cholesterol
- Improve digestion
- Prevent blood clots

But the best-known use for cinnamon is to **help control blood sugar and protect against Type II diabetes.**

This versatile spice has been shown in studies to accomplish this through the following actions:

- Encouraging normal insulin activity
- Helping tame sugar cravings
- Making you feel fuller after a meal

- Preventing chronic insulin resistance brought on by a high-sugar diet
- Stopping long-term damage to tissues due to chronic high blood sugar and insulin resistance

How can you take advantage of this delightful spice? Well, during this time of year, people tend to think of cinnamon in baked goods. But there are many healthier ways to enjoy it...

I like to add cinnamon to my full-fat, plain, Greek or Icelandic yogurt—or sprinkle it on fall fruits like apples. It can also be combined with other healthy spices in stews and chilis, along with meat and vegetable dishes.

In fact, one of my favorite autumn dishes is pork chops garnished with baked apples coated in cinnamon. Or you can rub a pork roast with a mixture of cinnamon, thyme, basil, and lemon.

Cinnamon is also a staple in Indian dishes like vegetable curries. And it's a key component in the mole sauce found in Mexican dishes.

So, don't be afraid to experiment with this “gift from the East.” **Just a quarter teaspoon a day** can enhance both your senses AND your health.