

The Inflammation and Heart Disease Theory does not exclude LDL-cholesterol. Re: High levels of bad cholesterol in early middle age are linked to CVD risk decades later, study finds

In the mid-1990s, the first author – as an American Heart Association (AHA) Lipid Reviewer - introduced The Inflammation and Heart Disease Theory [1,2] at a series of AHA conferences, which were further detailed and published in 1999 [3-5].

At the time cholesterol was viewed as the cause of coronary artery disease (CAD) and little was understood about the role of inflammation. Research at that time focused on adding hormone therapy to both men and women in an effort to reduce CAD; a treatment based upon an assumption of benefit, which turned out to be detrimental [6-12].

The inflammation theory received little attention until early 2004 when it was presented on 20/20 [13,14]. The complete inflammation and heart disease theory includes a number of variables, each of which must be considered and each of which interact differently in different individuals, based upon specific environmental and genetic conditions [15].

While it is easy to over simply the theory and exclude LDL cholesterol and saturated fat from the discussion on inflammation [16,17], it is dangerous to do so as it misleads individuals into a sense of je ne sais quoi. LDL cholesterol and saturated fat are very much a part of the Inflammation and Heart Disease Theory [5].

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Competing interests: The Inflammation and Heart Disease Theory was created by first author.