

How to Reverse Blood Vessel Disease

by the Go Red For Women Editors



Diet and ‘anti-aging’ supplements may help reverse endothelial dysfunction

If you have blood vessel disease, a shift in your diet may make a difference.

As it turns out, a diet *low* in grains, beans and certain vegetables — combined with “anti-aging” supplements — improved blood vessel function, in a study presented at the American Heart Association’s Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis and Vascular Biology 2013 Scientific Sessions.

The blood vessel abnormality, or endothelial dysfunction, occurs when cells lining the interior wall of blood vessels malfunction. It’s a serious condition that’s often one of the first signs of [heart disease](#).

Forty percent of the 200 51- to 86-year-old people in the study were women. All had risk factors for blood vessel disease and nearly three-quarters had endothelial dysfunction.

The diet restricted foods high in the sugar-binding protein lectin, generally regarded as a healthy nutrient. The restricted foods included grains, beans, fruit, poultry and plants belonging to the nightshade family, which includes tomatoes. At the same time, patients consumed plenty of leafy greens, shellfish and fish, olive oil and grass-fed animal protein, while [taking supplements](#) containing the antioxidant polyphenol from fish oil, grape seed extract and vitamins. Antioxidants are thought to slow cell aging.

“These findings represent a fundamental paradigm shift in how the diseases of the ‘Western Diet’ should be treated,” says Steven R. Gundry, M.D., lead author and medical director of the International Heart & Lung Institute at The Center for Restorative Medicine in Palm Springs, CA. “Simple removal of ‘healthy’ lectin-containing foods, and taking a few inexpensive supplements, may restore endothelial function to normal, which in turn can reverse high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity.”

Despite the study’s findings, however, consumers shouldn’t eliminate tomatoes or other healthy foods from their diets, says the American Heart Association. [The AHA recommends](#) a diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fish.

Find more information on [heart-healthy nutrition](#) on Go Red For Women.