

For 25 years as a thoracic surgeon, my life was passionately dedicated to treating heart disease; I gave many thousands of patients a second chance at life.

Then a few years ago I made the most difficult decision of my medical career. I left the surgery that I loved to have the freedom necessary to speak the truth about heart disease, inflammation, statin medications, and the current methods of treating heart disease.

It was an exciting time to be a young cardiac surgeon in the eighties. A new surgical technique, coronary bypass, was the only effective treatment for people afflicted with severe coronary artery disease. Our ability to save lives increased and the risks of surgery decreased as techniques and technology improved.

Desperately sick and diseased patients could be restored and rehabilitated with relatively low risk, it was an exciting challenge. During my career as a surgeon I performed over 5000 coronary bypass operations.

The consensus at that time was that elevated cholesterol in the blood caused a gradual deposition of cholesterol in the channel of the blood vessel. We had two obvious treatment choices; lower the levels of cholesterol in the blood or do an operation to detour the blood around the accumulated plaque in the artery thus restoring blood flow and function to the heart muscle.

Other than looking at more effective ways to lower blood cholesterol, there was relatively little research going on as to what was causing the plaque. The medical community had settled on the idea that it was as simple as controlling saturated fat and cholesterol.

Statin drugs, the ones your Doctor insists that you take if your cholesterol is slightly elevated and Bernie Madoff (the now infamous financial fraudster) have both left in their wake many innocent victims, and many sincere but misled supporters. Both are huge frauds perpetrated on the unsuspecting.

Mr. Madoff, over 30 years swindled people out of about \$50 billion. Statins have a worldwide market of over \$30 billion annually and have had for many years. In addition, the testing for and treating elevated cholesterol costs about \$100 billion annually with no noticeable benefit to the victims, I mean patients.

I'm not sure if Mr. Madoff intended to swindle when he started out, but reading the reports it seems things got out of hand and he had to continue to tell a false story in order to keep the money flowing into his coffers to support his and his supporters' lavish lifestyles, and perpetuate the fraud.

I'm not sure that the statin makers intended to swindle in the beginning but they also were not about to give up on a \$30 billion annual market easily. There are many sincere, well intentioned and deeply convinced physicians that will continue to support the theory that dietary cholesterol and saturated fats cause heart disease.

They will continue to believe that cholesterol lowering medications will successfully treat and prevent heart disease in spite of the fact that a study published in The American Heart Journal (January 2009) analyzing 137,000 patients admitted to hospitals in the United States with a heart attack demonstrated that almost 75% had "normal" cholesterol levels.

This fact continued to bother me during my surgical career. The idea that a normal substance, namely cholesterol, would cause heart disease never resonated with me. I would see patients coming back for second coronary bypass operations a few years after their first, having had normal cholesterol levels the entire time. In the operating room I had made the observation that there seemed to be inflammation around the coronary arteries that I was bypassing.

Through brilliant and massive marketing the makers of statin drugs have skillfully influenced science and controlled public policy so that prescribing statin drugs has become the standard of care. Anyone questioning or disagreeing with these policies is labeled as a heretic, disregarded and ridiculed.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), The National Cholesterol Education Program, The American Heart Association and many academic centers are led and influenced by physicians who receive direct or indirect benefit from the makers of statin drugs.

Their influence is so pervasive that recently the FDA approved Crestor®, a statin, to treat patients with normal cholesterol. Some of these academics have called for treating children with statin drugs. Marketing has truly triumphed over medicine.

Treating or attempting to prevent heart disease with statin drugs is dangerous and fraudulent for two reasons:

- 1.) Serious, deadly and disabling side effects which are largely ignored by the medical profession and suppressed by the statin makers. These side effects have been brilliantly documented by Dr. Duane Graveline and other brave doctors who dare to speak out against the official religion of cholesterol and saturated fat.
- 2.) Continued focus on this ineffective treatment diverts attention from truly understanding and controlling heart disease, and gives patients a false sense of security that prevents them from making the lifestyle changes that would truly prevent and reverse heart disease.

Consider also the following:

- 1.) Statins have not been proven to help any woman of any age!
- 2.) Statins have not been proven to help anyone over the age of 65!
- 3.) The only group of patients who may, and I emphasize "may" get any benefit, are middle aged men who have had a previous heart attack.

It is amazing to see all the medical literature that is funded by the statin makers and delivered to doctors' offices by enthusiastic young drug reps that purport to prove that statins are beneficial.

The very best statistical manipulation shows that one must treat at least 10 people for several years for 1 to have possible benefit. I'll bet that when your doctor told you to take statins you were not told that under the most favorable statistical slant on the data there is only 1 chance in 10 that you will benefit.

The much publicized JUPITER study which led the FDA to approve Crestor® for people with normal cholesterol showed that treating 100 people for 3 years with Crestor® "may" have prevented one heart attack.

Yet the approval was granted and millions of people were exposed to the risks of statins with no possible benefit except to the maker of Crestor®. Do you think the process is pure and clean and free of improper influence?

Just as a point of reference, if I had treated 100 people with the correct antibiotic for an infection 99 would have been cured. This is why I call statin treatment a scam that is bigger and more harmful than anything Bernie Madoff pulled off, at least his victims only lost money, not their health.

In spite of being Chief of Staff and Chief of Surgery at a large specialty heart hospital I found that I could not change Medicine no matter how much I preached and pleaded, no matter how much scientific evidence I gathered that cholesterol was not a problem and that treating cholesterol with medications was counter productive.

So I made that difficult decision and left my successful surgical practice in order to have the freedom to speak, write and teach the truth about heart disease. I wrote a book *The Cure for Heart Disease*, which explains that the real cause of heart disease is low grade inflammation. For without inflammation cholesterol would never accumulate in the wall of the blood vessel and cause plaque with its eventual consequence of heart attack and death.

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Dr. Lundell's experience in Cardiovascular & Thoracic Surgery over the last 25 years includes certification by the American Board of Surgery, the American Board of Thoracic Surgery, and the Society of Thoracic Surgeons.

Dr. Lundell was a pioneer in off-pump coronary artery bypass or "beating heart" surgery reducing surgical complications and recovery times.

He has served as Chief resident at the University of Arizona and Yale University Hospitals and later served as Chief of Staff and Chief of Surgery.

He was one of the founding partners of the Lutheran Heart Hospital which became the second largest Heart hospital in the U.S.