

Heart & Artery Disease - Is There Anything That Can Really Help?

Definition of Heart Disease

The term heart disease (coronary heart disease) is a term that describes many heart disorders, including high blood pressure, coronary artery disease, and clogging of the arteries.

Any number of diseases related to the heart and blood vessels can come under the umbrella of heart disease. Grouped together these diseases are the leading cause of death in the Western world.

The most common types of heart disease occur due to inadequate blood flow to the heart muscle.

NB: Obese people are at increased risk of due to their higher rates of hypercholesterolemia (high LDL cholesterol), diabetes and hypertension.

Description of a Healthy Heart

Your heart is a living pump. A healthy heart works to keep your blood moving and oxygenated. A network of blood vessels called coronary arteries supply blood and nutrients to your heart to keep it functioning in this way.

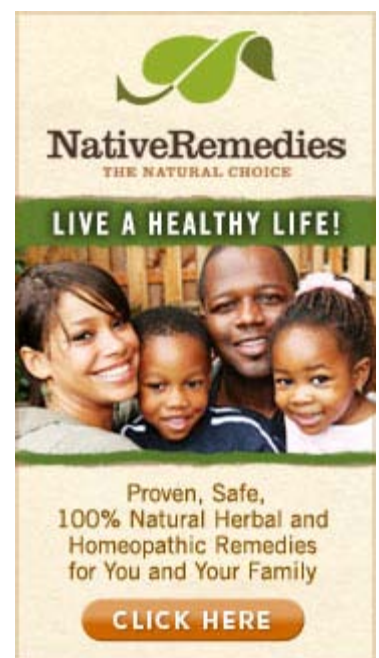
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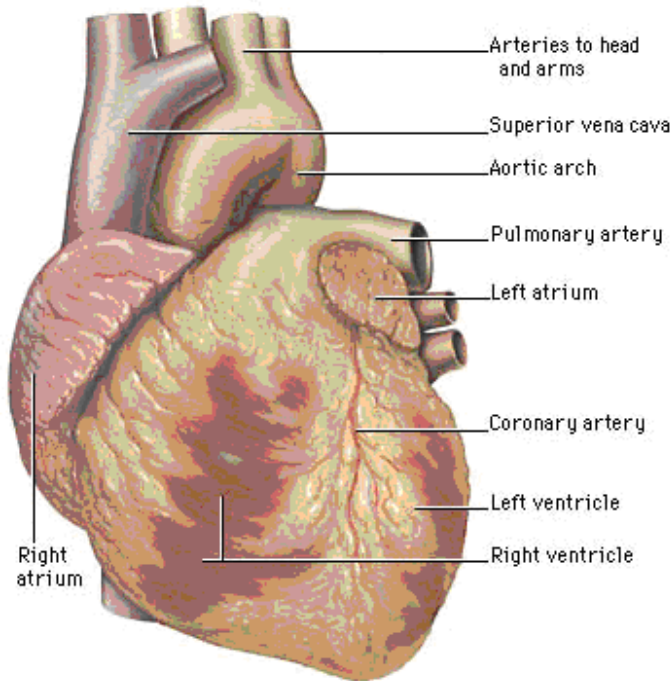
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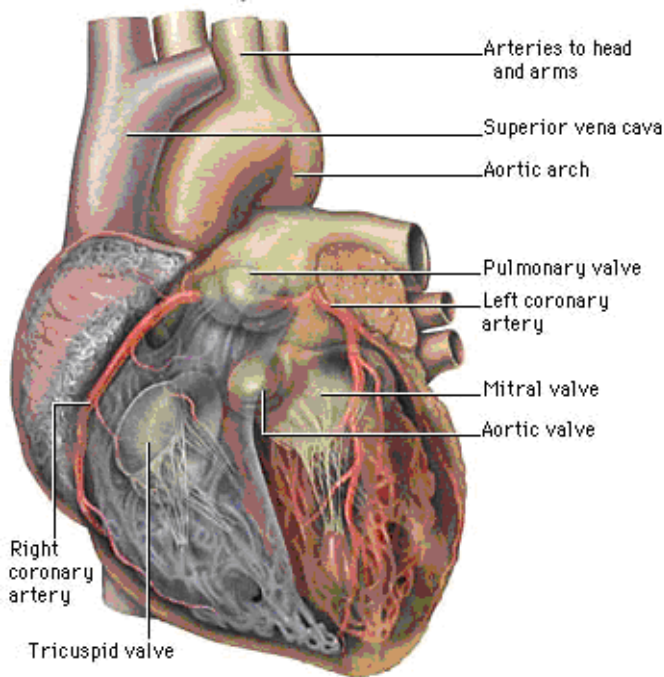
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An advertisement for NativeRemedies. At the top is a green leaf logo. Below it, the text reads "NativeRemedies" in a bold, serif font, with "THE NATURAL CHOICE" in a smaller, sans-serif font underneath. A green horizontal bar contains the text "LIVE A HEALTHY LIFE!". Below this is a photograph of a smiling family: a woman, a man, and two young children. At the bottom, the text says "Proven, Safe, 100% Natural Herbal and Homeopathic Remedies for You and Your Family". A brown button with the text "CLICK HERE" is positioned at the very bottom.

Exterior structures of the heart



Interior structures of the heart



There are three main coronary arteries – right (RCA), left anterior descending (LAD) and left circumflex artery (CX).

Each of the coronary arteries branches into smaller arteries that reach all the areas of your heart muscle.

The heart pumps ‘used’ blood through the lung capillaries where waste gas (carbon dioxide) is expelled and fresh oxygen is taken up. This fresh oxygenated blood is bright red and is pumped through the aorta (the main artery of the heart) into the capillaries, where nutrient and oxygen exchange within cells takes place. It then returns to the heart through veins.

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Heart failure, for whatever reason, can be fatal. The heart is one of the hardest working organs in the body. It contracts and expands around 100,000 times a day, it supplies 96,000 kilometres of blood vessels and pumps in excess of 10,000 litres of blood around the body each day. This constant action is stressful and makes this system particularly vulnerable to damage and disease.

Heart disease is any disorder that affects the heart's ability to function in this normal way.

Some heart diseases can be present at birth (congenital); others develop as we grow and may be dependant on factors like genetics, diet (nutrition), the environment and toxins; others may be degenerative (or medical).

Problems can arise in the heart muscle, valves, or surrounding arteries. The most common form of heart disease is a narrowing or blocking of the coronary arteries (atherosclerosis). Following are examples of terms used to describe heart disease, followed by brief explanations of the most common problems:

Cardiovascular disease involves the heart and its two networks of blood vessels, the system which circulates the blood throughout the body and the system which circulates the blood through the lungs.

Coronary artery diseases (CAD) are diseases of the arteries that supply the heart muscle with blood. CAD is one of the most common forms of heart disease and the leading cause of heart attacks. It generally comes from blood flow obstructions. The most common cause of such obstructions is a condition called atherosclerosis. Coronary artery disease can cause other heart problems, such as chest pain angina and heart attack (myocardial infarction).

Coronary heart disease is also known as ischemic heart disease and is similar to coronary artery disease but a broader term that refers to both diseases of the arteries and their resulting complications, (chest pain, heart attacks and scar tissue).

Cardiomyopathy is a condition that includes all diseases of the heart muscle. Types of cardiomyopathy include ischemic, which is caused by loss of heart muscle from a heart attack; dilated, which means the heart is enlarged; hypertrophic, which means the heart muscle is thickened; and idiopathic or dilated idopathic, which means an enlarged heart without a known cause.



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Above is a normal, healthy heart - It has a complex grouping of outer muscles that work together to pump blood through the body.



Above is a weak, diseased heart - This is a heart with muscle disease. It looks larger than a healthy heart. A heart like this cannot pump blood properly.

Valvular heart disease is a disease of the heart valves, narrowing, leaking or improper closure.

Pericardial disease is a disease of the sac that encases the heart (pericardium). Fluid accumulation (pericardial effusion) and stiffness (constrictive pericarditis). These can occur alone or together.

Congenital heart diseases are forms of heart disease that develop before birth and affect the formation of the heart muscle or its chambers or valves. Some congenital heart defects may be apparent from the time of birth, while others may not be detected until later in life.

Heart failure is not a condition where the heart stops. It is a condition which describes the heart not being able to pump blood adequately to the body's organs and tissues. Vital organs don't get enough blood, and therefore oxygen, causing signs like shortness of breath, fluid retention and fatigue.

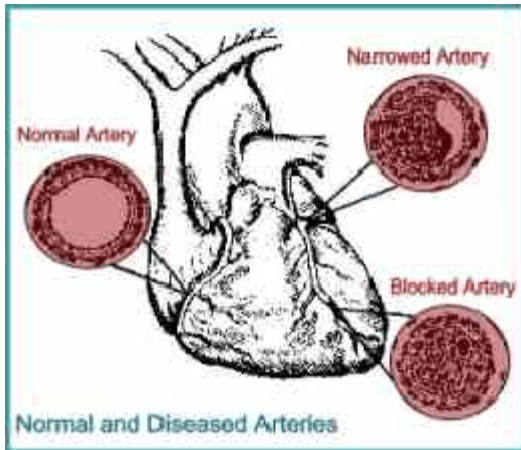
Blood vessels diseases

There are four types of blood vessels. They are:

- **Arteries that carry blood away from your heart and out to your body, delivering oxygen and nutrients.**
- Veins that carry deoxygenated blood back to your heart.
- **Capillaries that connect arteries and veins.**
- Lymphatics that carry this fluid back to the central circulatory system.

Types of blood vessel disorders include:

Arteriosclerosis and atherosclerosis



Arteriosclerosis is a condition in which the walls of your arteries become thick and stiff. Restricting blood flow to organs and tissues.

Atherosclerosis is the most common form of arteriosclerosis, referring to hardening of the arteries caused by accumulation of fatty deposits (plaques), often calcified, develop on the inside of the arterial walls and eventually cause blockages which lead to cardiovascular disease.

When the arteries of the heart narrow, you may experience chest pain or a heart attack.

Atherosclerosis is the result of the body's attempt to 'repair' injuries to the inside of the arterial walls. These injuries come about because of weaknesses in the walls and their exposed stress from the constant pumping action of the heart. Stress is increased by high blood pressure (hypertension) and emotional trauma.

This illustration shows gradual buildup of plaque in an artery (top to bottom) leading to arteriosclerosis or "hardening" of the artery.



The prevention of heart disease, heart attacks and strokes is synonymous with the prevention of atherosclerosis.

High blood pressure

Hypertension is the excessive force of blood pumping through your blood vessels due to restrictions. It affects 1 in every 4 people.

It is important to remember that hypertension is not a condition. It is a symptom of an underlying problem...ie. narrowing arteries. In societies that do not have high cardiovascular disease rates, high-fat diets and obesity, or stressful, fast modern lives, hypertension does not occur. It is a common symptom of underlying stress or body malfunction. If this cause is pinpointed and treated, the hypertension will naturally subside to normal levels.

Common underlying causes that bring about high blood pressure including lifestyle issues such as excess alcohol, caffeine, high salt intake, hormone therapies, stress, anxiety and lack of exercise, as well as conditions like diabetes, arteriosclerosis, high cholesterol, and many of the cardiac diseases listed here.

Although potentially life-threatening, because hypertension is a symptom of a condition it is very much preventable and curable. If left untreated, the symptom will of course worsen, putting undue pressure on the heart muscle and depleting blood vessel strength. After a period of time this will lead to serious cardiac disease such as stroke and heart failure.

Stroke

A stroke is a sudden loss of brain function. It occurs when blood flowing to the brain is interrupted (ischemia) or when blood vessels in the brain rupture (haemorrhage). Stroke can cause a number of neurological complications.

Aneurysm

An aneurysm is a bulge or weakness in the wall of an artery or vein. Aneurysms usually enlarge over time, and because of this they have the

potential to rupture and cause life-threatening bleeding. Aneurysms can occur in arteries in any location in your body.

Peripheral arterial disease and claudication

Claudication is when you experience pain in your arms or legs during exercise, a symptom of peripheral arterial disease. It is a disorder in which the arteries supplying blood to your limbs become clogged or partially blocked. Pain or cramping is commonly the first sign.

Vasculitis

This refers to an inflammation of the blood vessels. Vasculitis can affect the arteries, veins or capillaries. The inflammation may impair general blood flow.

Venous incompetence

This is a condition in which blood flows the wrong way through your veins. Veins have tiny valves that are designed to promote blood flow in a forward direction, i.e. back to the heart. However, if you happen to be suffering from infection, inflammation, abnormal blood clotting, or even high-back pressure in pregnancy, the valves may become damaged, allowing blood to flow backward and 'pool' in your legs.

Venous incompetence can lead to the development of such complications as prominent and painful varicose veins, skin changes, ulcers and swelling in your legs.

When venous incompetence occurs in your arms, you may experience pain and swelling in your arms and prominent veins may appear.

Venous thrombosis

This is the formation of a blood clot (thrombus) in a vein that may damage the vein or its valves. Clots that break off and travel in the bloodstream can lodge in the lungs, (pulmonary embolism). This type of clot may cause a stroke. Deep vein thrombosis is where a similar clot develops deep within a muscle.

Varicose veins

This is a condition in which your veins become twisted and enlarged. The veins are usually located on the backs of your calves or on the inside of your legs. When valves in your veins don't function properly, blood can accumulate in your legs, causing the veins to bulge and twist.

Lymphedema

This is an obstruction of the lymphatic vessels that causes an excessive build-up of fluid, resulting in swelling and pain.

Heart Disease Statistics

*"Heart and blood vessel diseases kill more than 16 million people worldwide and account for 30% of total deaths each year." -----
(WHO)*

Cardiovascular diseases are the number one killer of both women and men.

US Facts

- **More than 1.5 million heart attacks occur every year in the US.**
- 50 million Americans have high blood pressure.
- **Every 20 seconds an American suffers a coronary event. Every 34 seconds someone dies from heart disease.**

European Facts

- **CVD kills 4 million Europeans each year. It's the No 1 cause of death.**
- 1 British adult dies from heart disease every 3 minutes.
- **Strokes claim over 70,000 UK lives each year.**

Cardiovascular disease is very much a disease of Western civilization.

Causes of Cardiovascular Disease

Decades of research show that poor lifestyle choices, beginning in childhood, are the main causes of cardiovascular / heart disease. Ongoing factors, such as poor diet, nutritional deficiency, lack of exercise, poor fluid intake and increased toxicity and stresses form a recipe for circulatory disaster.

All of the above are major risk factors. More specifically, high blood pressure - hypertension (itself a result of any/all of the above), tobacco use, increased intake of saturated fats, lack of essential antioxidants (excessive exposure to free radicals via pesticides, chlorinated water, air pollutants and other toxic chemicals, for example, is a strong risk factor for cardiovascular disease), elevated blood cholesterol, convenience lifestyle (i.e. reduced exercise) and genetic predisposition.

All these and more lead to increased stress factors, obesity and diabetes... in turn leading to heart attacks, strokes, arteriosclerosis, and more

NB: Stress not only raises the blood pressure and constricts the arteries, it also generates large quantities of adrenalin which the body converts to adrenochrome - a potent free radical.

The more 'risk factors' you have, the more likely you are to develop heart disease. All of these factors, bar genetic factors, can be changed and treated, even genetic risks can be modified with proper treatment.

Blood pressure can vary with activity and age, but a healthy adult who is resting generally has a systolic pressure reading between 120 and

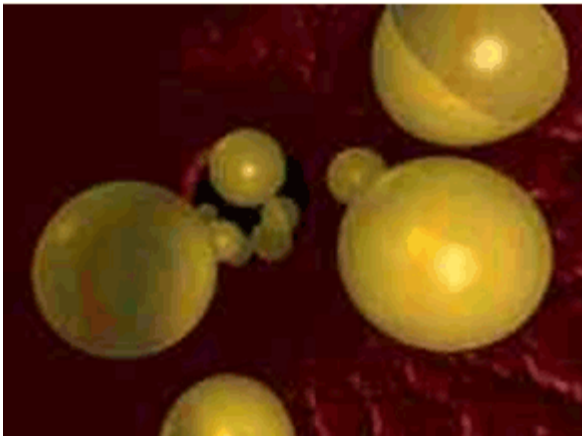
130 and a diastolic pressure reading between 80 and 90 (or below).

Free radical activity plays a major role in the development and progression of atherosclerosis in particular, through oxidized lipoproteins and through direct attacks on the DNA of the arterial wall cells.

As the body attempts to repair damage to arterial walls, smooth-muscle cells (at the centre of the repair) themselves accumulate cholesterol and oxidized lipoproteins, and may begin to undergo calcification. As these deposits grow the inside opening of the artery begins to narrow, eventually create a blockage. If the blockage is in the coronary arteries angina pectoris may develop, or a heart attack may occur. If it is in the brain a stroke may occur, and if the blockage is in the legs intermittent claudication (pain or fatigue in arms and legs due to poor supply of oxygen to the muscles) may be experienced.

Iron has more recently been implicated in heart disease development. Researchers at Harvard University have concluded that it is not the overall iron intake that increases heart attack risks, but rather the specific intake of iron from red meats – potentially increasing your disease risk by up to 38%!

Cholesterol levels, and more specifically high LDL (low density lipoprotein) levels, are strong risk factors for cardiovascular disease, especially for men. Too much LDL cholesterol in the blood causes plaque to form on artery walls (the beginning of atherosclerosis). When this occurs arteries that supply blood to the heart get blocked (see description above) and you become at high risk of a heart attack. ([See our Cholesterol section for more info](#))



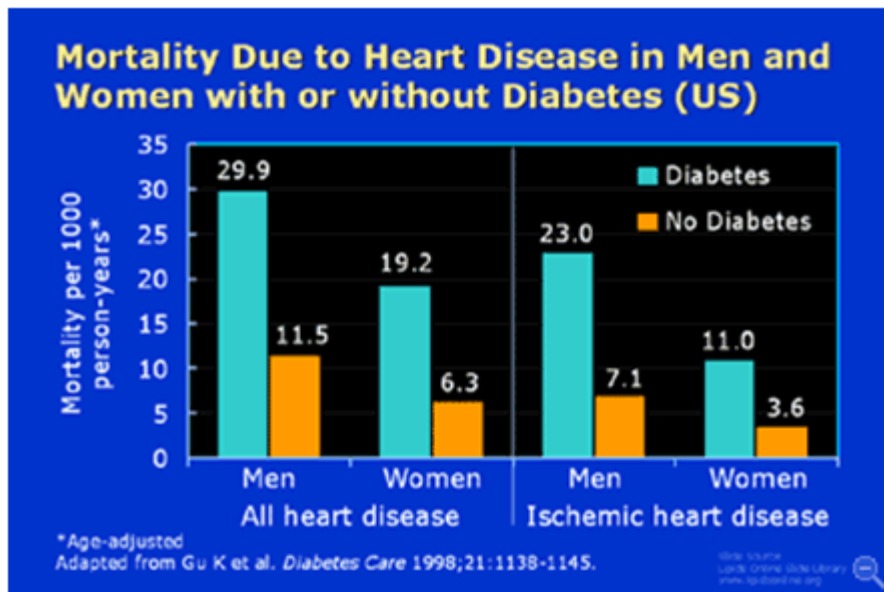
Cholesterol is a soft, buttery substance. If the only build-up on the inside of the arteries were cholesterol, it would not get hard and the flow of blood would wash away the stuff. But, when that cholesterol gets mixed up with calcium the combination of the two becomes hard. That is why the honest term, used before the drug companies started fiddling with the facts, was 'hardening of the arteries'.

Homocysteine is an amino acid in the blood, high levels of which can significantly increase the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Mercury toxicity and *Helicobacter pylori* bacterium infection are potent initiators of coronary heart disease.

Diabetes

It is not often well understood that heart problems are actually a consequence (and symptom) of diabetes, and are the leading cause of death among diabetes sufferers, especially in adult-onset, or Type II diabetes. The American Heart Association estimates that 65% of patients with diabetes die of some form of cardiovascular disease. ([See our Diabetes section for more info](#))



Obesity...Being overweight is, alongside diabetes, the leading cause of increased cholesterol levels, high blood pressure and coronary artery disease. Obesity increases your chances of developing all these risk factors in fact, as well as putting unnecessary strain on many other organs.

NB: Just from these short summaries you may be beginning to notice how all these conditions clearly interlink with one another.

Smoking, as well as increasing your risk of lung cancer, increases risks of heart disease and peripheral vascular disease. More than 400,000 deaths in the US alone occur each year because of the straining effects this habit has on the heart and blood vessels.

Research has shown that smoking increases the heart rate, tightens major arteries and can create irregularities in the timing of heartbeats, all of which make your heart work harder.

Although nicotine is the main active agent in cigarette smoke, other chemicals and compounds like tar and carbon monoxide are harmful to

your heart too and lead to plaque build-up and injury to the vessel walls.

Inflammation...C-reactive protein (CRP) is a substance found in blood that is a marker for inflammation in the body. High levels of this protein are associated with an increased risk of heart disease and low levels with a low risk.

Studies suggest that CRP levels may even be a more important indicator of heart disease risk than high LDL cholesterol!

"In an eight-year study involving 27,939 women led by Paul Ridker, MD, director of the Center for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, more than half of the women who eventually developed heart disease had high CRP levels even though their LDL levels were not considered high. "

The New England Journal of Medicine
November 2002

"A Cleveland Clinic study found ultrasound evidence that clogged coronary arteries had not gotten worse among 502 patients who were most successful at lowering their CRP levels. "

The New England Journal of Medicine
January 2005

"A recent study at showed that as fitness levels go down, CRP levels go up. "

Johns Hopkins

To help lower CRP levels it is recommended to concentrate on an anti-inflammatory diet, plus Omega 3 DHA fish oil supplements and anti-inflammatory and antioxidant supplement ingredients which include methylating agents to reduce homocysteine.

Finally, other indirect factors include...

Physical Inactivity - People who are inactive have a greater risk of disease leading to a heart attack. Exercise burns calories, helps to control cholesterol and diabetes, and may help to lower blood pressure. Exercise also strengthens the heart muscle itself and makes the arteries more flexible. Even moderate exercise is helpful if done regularly.

Genetics - Risk factors (high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity) may be passed from one generation to another.

Stress - We all deal with stress differently. How much and in what way stress affects us can vary from person to person. During times of stress the nervous system releases extra hormones (e.g. adrenaline). These hormones can raise blood pressure and injure the lining of the arteries. When the arteries heal the walls may harden or thicken, making it easier for plaque to build up.

Stress also increases the amount of blood clotting factors that circulate

in your blood. Clots may block an artery already narrowed by plaque, resulting in a heart attack.

Nutritional deficiency and toxicity

It is never too late to begin improving heart health. By eliminating risk factors and properly managing your health, you can greatly reduce your risk of heart disease, and even begin to heal disease that is already present.

Most people become vulnerable to these diseases because of a weakened immune system and systemic and organ-related weaknesses as a result of inadequate nutrition. This more often than not starts in early life, but continues to reduce health throughout life. Nutritional deficiencies, chemical and environmental toxicities are the major reason for the accentuation of most, if not all of the above risk factors.

Diagnosis of Cardiovascular Disease

Sadly, in most cases the first indication of cardiovascular disease is an actual acute heart event. This is because many of the underlying symptoms are either mistakenly considered a consequence of some other condition or disease, or they are simply misdiagnosed.

On most occasions symptoms are not noticed by the patient until such time that they cause a major condition....often being put down to another unrelated condition, being 'run down', or being under 'stress'.

Angina pectoris (chest pain) and **stroke** (cerebral infarction) are the most common physical symptoms that are first noticed.

If prior symptoms are realised, techniques and equipment can be used to confirm a diagnoses:

Electrocardiograms are tests particularly indicative for people with high risk factors (smoking, diabetes, obesity and hypertension). They can even show if a patient has already suffered a mild heart attack without noticing it.

Radioisotopes help to spot blood flow problems.

An **Echocardiography** is useful to evaluate the heart's performance.

Position emission tomography (PET scanning), CT scanning and magnetic resonance spectroscopy are also commonly used.

Surgery

Coronary arteriography is an invasive technique used to determine the extent and location of blockages in coronary arteries. It is only used prior to heart surgery such as angioplasty or bypass surgery.

As in all cases of potentially chronic illness, a thorough history - medical and genetic - should be taken, along with lifestyle, nutritional and dietary implications, and any other factors to help determine risk and current health statistics.

Signs & Symptoms

As mentioned above, often symptoms are not noticeable until an actual stage of disease has already manifested. Some symptoms associated with coronary artery disease may be more pronounced however. Such signs include:

Angina (chest pain) - This is the most common symptom, resulting from the heart intermittently not getting enough blood or oxygen. The intensity of the pain may vary from person to person.

Typical chest pain is felt under the sternum and is characterised by a heavy feeling, or a feeling of the chest being squeezed. Pain may also radiate to the shoulders, neck, or arms. It is often precipitated by exertion or emotional stress and is relieved by rest.

Women may also have a tendency to experience some areas of swelling - the ankles and legs for example – plus stomach upset, dizziness, rapid heartbeats, shortness of breath and chronic fatigue.

Shortness of breath – This can be a symptom of congestive heart failure (among many other things). The heart may be weak due to lack of blood and oxygen, resulting in shortness of breath accompanied by swollen feet and ankles too due to the reduced circulation.

When A Heart Attack is experienced you may experience intense chest pain that can be acute or last for a more extended period of time. There may be a sensation of pressure, burning, tightness, heaviness, or squeezing behind the breastbone. Pain in the left arm or jaw and of course laboured breathing also may occur. Alternatively pain may be more diffuse, spreading to the shoulders, neck, arms, abdomen and even back. Pain may come and go, feeling like a heaviness or burning sensation in the chest rather than intense pain.

Some victims of coronary heart disease experience none of these symptoms, while others experience them at varying levels. Initial emergency treatment is often recommended, such as the chewing of a regular strength adult Aspirin to inhibit blood clotting in the affecting coronary artery.

Stroke symptoms include a number of warning signs:

- **Changes in vision**
- Leg, arm, or face weakness
- **A sudden, severe headache**
- Changes in speech and hearing

- **Unsteadiness or unexplained dizziness**
- Nausea, vomiting, or drowsiness

Symptoms may be especially noticeable on one particular side of the body.

Heart Failure symptoms may include:

- **Fatigue**
- Shortness of breath
- **Persistent coughing**
- Swelling of the feet, ankles, legs, or abdomen.

Symptoms may continue for years unnoticed as the heart weakens.

Treatment of Heart Disease

As is the case with most degenerative diseases there are two avenues of treatment - conventional (allopathic) and alternative (natural) treatment.

Conventional medicine employs surgery and drugs to treat the symptoms of cardiovascular disease.

On the other hand, alternative methods concentrate on the whole body and underlying problem to bolster the body's natural healing powers and focus on removing the actual cause of the disease rather just treating the symptoms.

Conventional medicine helps to diagnose and treat acute, life-threatening events, but natural 'wholistic' methods are more gentle, have far fewer side effects and are capable of actually reversing heart disease and regaining full health as well as working to protect and prevent disease occurring in the first place.

Conventional Treatments

Lifestyle changes are of course the first line of prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease.

Conventional medicine recommends medical interventions ranging from drugs to surgery. For example, a bypass operation may be performed to reduce a person's risk of a heart attack, or to try to help stop any further heart attacks from taking place. When this operation is performed a blood vessel from another body area is used to 're-route' blood around the blocked artery.

Many prescription medications are used every day to help prevent or control coronary heart disease (CHD). However, if medications are

needed lifestyle changes still must be undertaken for results to take effect.

Common Drugs used to treat CHD include:

Aspirin helps to lower the risk of a heart attack for those who have already had one. It also helps to keep arteries open in those who have had a previous heart bypass or other procedure.

However, because of its side effects aspirin is not approved by the Food and Drug Administration in the US for preventing heart attacks in healthy individuals with careful assessment.

Some of the most common aspirin side effects are stomach pain, heartburn, nausea and vomiting. (An aspirin overdose or higher dosage than recommended can cause very serious health issues).

Long-term use of Aspirin has shown to cause gastrointestinal tract complications, including micro-bleeding and ulcers. There is also a risk of haemorrhagic stroke.

ACE (angiotensin converting enzyme) inhibitors stop the production of a chemical that makes blood vessels narrow and is used to help control high blood pressure and help heal damaged heart muscle. It may be prescribed after a heart attack to help the heart pump more efficiently. It is also used for heart failure cases.

Side effects may include a dry cough, headache and dizziness. ACE inhibitors may also cause elevated amounts of potassium. More rare side effects can include skin rashes, kidney problems, and swelling of the face, lips and throat.

Example drugs: Benazepril (Lotensin), Captopril (Capoten), Enalapril (Vasotec), Fosinopril (Monopril), Lisinopril (Prinivil, Zestril), Moexipril (Univasc), Perindopril (Aceon), Quinapril (Accupril), Ramipril (Altace), Trandolapril (Mavik).

Angiotensin II Receptor Blockers

Angiotensin II constricts blood vessels and causes the kidneys to retain more fluid. The main function is to increase blood pressure.

Angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs) inhibit the effects of angiotensin II by blocking the receptor, thereby reducing constriction and helping to reduce blood pressure.

ARBs also help to minimize over-exertion of the heart muscle and help prevent progression to heart failure. ARBs are mainly used when ACE inhibitors are not tolerated by the individual.

Side effects may include headache, lightheadedness, nasal congestion, back and leg pain, diarrhea, rash, indigestion and insomnia. More rare side effects may include kidney failure, liver failure, allergic reaction, reduced white blood cell count and swelling of tissues (angioedema).

Because ARBs can cause birth defects they are not recommended if pregnant or planning to become pregnant.

Example drugs: Candesartan (Atacand), Eprosartan (Teveten), Irbesartan (Avapro), Losartan (Cozaar), Olmesartan (Benicar), Telmisartan (Micardis), Valsartan (Diovan).

News

Do angiotensin II receptor blockers increase MI risk, or do they not? A pair of articles in 'Circulation' magazine/journal discusses the controversy over whether or not angiotensin-II-receptor blockers (ARB) result in a paradoxical increase in risk of myocardial infarction (MI), despite reducing blood pressure. (Also raised, in a BMJ editorial in 2004.)

Suggesting that these drugs do increase the risk of MI argue firstly that in general, clinical trials with ARB have not shown the reduction in MI risk that could have been expected given the drop in blood pressure that they achieve. They discuss the major trials involving ARB, and also the various (and discordant) meta-analyses that have been carried out....

Antiplatelets

Blood clots can block blood flow to the heart or brain, causing a heart attack or stroke. Antiplatelet medications work by preventing platelets from sticking together to form blood clots to reduce the risk of a heart attack or stroke occurring, specifically in people who have already had a heart attack or stroke, or who have poor circulation that causes pain.

Possible side effects include allergic reaction (sneezing, respiratory congestion, swelling of throat, restricted breathing, itching or skin rashes), nausea, indigestion or stomach pain, unusual bleeding or bruising, ringing in ears (tinnitus), bloody urine, convulsions or seizures (rare).

Example drugs: Clopidogrel (Plavix), Ticlopidine (Ticlid).

Beta blockers slow the heart and make it beat with less force, so blood pressure drops and the heart works less hard. It is used for high blood pressure, chest pain and to prevent a repeat heart attack.

The most common side effects are cold hands and feet, tiredness and sleep disturbance (nightmares). Less common side effects include, impotence, dizziness, wheezing, digestive tract problems, skin rashes and dry eyes.

Example drugs: Acebutolol (Sectral), Atenolol (Tenormin), Atenolol Injection (Tenormin Injection), Bisoprolol (Zebeta), Carteolol (Cartrol), Metoprolol ER (Toprol XL), Metoprolol Oral (Lopressor), Nadolol (Corgard), Pindolol (Visken), Propranolol (Inderal), Propranolol ER (Betachron ER, Inderal LA, Innopran XL), Timolol Oral (Blocadren).

News

Guidelines issued by the NHS drugs watchdog have given new advice on which medicines should be used to treat high blood pressure. They recommend that beta-blockers should no longer be routinely used, except in special situations....

There is also increasing evidence that the most frequently used beta-blockers can carry a higher risk.

Nitrates (including nitroglycerine) – relax blood vessels and stop chest pain.

Side effects include a feeling of pulsating fullness in the head (most common side effect) or a headache, a drop in blood pressure, which can cause dizziness or a burning sensation under the tongue.

Example drugs: Isosorbide Dinitrate, Sublingual and Chewable (Isordil, Sorbitrate), Isosorbide Mononitrate (Imdur, Ismo, Isotrate ER, Monoket), Nitroglycerin ER (Nitroglyn), Nitroglycerin Ointment (Nitro-Bid Ointment, Nitrol), Nitroglycerin Skin Patches (Deponit, Minitran, Nitro-Dur, Nitrodisc, Transderm-Nitro), Nitroglycerin Spray (Nitrolingual).

Calcium channel blockers – relax blood vessels and are used for high blood pressure and chest pain.

Side effects can include drowsiness, increased appetite, weight gain, breathing difficulties (shortness of breath, coughing, or wheezing), irregular or slow heartbeat, allergic reactions (skin rash or hair loss), constipation, tenderness or bleeding of the gums, swelling of feet, ankles and legs, and fainting.

Example drugs: Amlodipine (Norvasc), Bepridil (Vascor), Diltiazem ER (Cardizem CD, Cardizem LA, Cardizem SR, Cartia XT, Dilacor XR, Diltia XT, Taztia XT, Tiamate, Tiazac), Felodipine (Plendil), Isradipine (DynaCirc), Nicardipine (Cardene), Nicardipine SR (Cardene SR), Nifedipine ER (Adalat CC, Afeditab CR, Nifediac CC, Procardia XL), Nisoldipine (Sular), Verapamil (Calan, Isoptin), Verapamil Extended-release (Calan SR, Covera-HS, Isoptin SR, Verelan, Verelan PM).

Oral Anticoagulants - these are like antiplatelets, but work to dissolve blood clots that have already formed. By dissolving the blood clots anticoagulants can lower the risk for heart attack and stroke.

Side effects may include bleeding from gums, nosebleeds, pinpoint skin spots, heavier bleeding, cough or hoarseness, fever or chills, lower back or side pain, painful or difficult urination, skin rash, hives and itching, blisters, blue or purple toes, ulcers, or white spots in mouth or throat, swelling of face, feet, or lower legs and yellow eyes or skin.

Example drugs: Warfarin (Coumadin, Jantoven), Hepalin injection.

Salicylates - reduce pain and swelling by blocking the body's production of chemicals that cause inflammation.

Salicylates (see Aspirin above) are also used to help prevent platelets from sticking together to form blood clots. These medications can reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke, specifically in people with poor circulation.

Side effects can include bloody stools, bloody or cloudy urine, fever, chills, pain in lower back, skin rash, hives, itching, ulcers, white spots on lips or in mouth, sore throat, stuffy nose, swelling of face or extremities, unusual bleeding or bruising, tiredness or weakness, vomiting, weight gain, yellow eyes or skin, heartburn or indigestion, nausea, vomiting, or stomach pain, drowsiness, trouble sleeping, nervousness or jitters.

Example drugs: Aspirin Gum.

Diuretics ('water pills') - decrease fluid in the body and are used for high blood pressure.

Side effects may include black stools, blood in urine, cough or hoarseness, fever or chills, joint pain, lower back or side pain, pinpoint red skin spots, skin rash or hives, stomach pain, nausea and vomiting and yellow eyes or skin.

Diuretics can also be associated with potassium and/or sodium loss...

Signs of potassium loss can include dryness of mouth, increased thirst, irregular heartbeat, mood changes, muscle cramps or pain, nausea or vomiting, unusual tiredness or weakness and a weak pulse.

Signs of sodium loss can include confusion, convulsions, decreased mental activity, irritability, muscle cramps and unusual tiredness or weakness.

Blood cholesterol-lowering agents - decrease LDL cholesterol levels in the blood.

Side effects include soreness, aches, pain, weakness, fatigue, difficulty walking or getting out of bed. Also many reports exist on the use of Statin drugs and muscle or nerve damage.

News

High Doses of Statins Carry Dangers, Swedish Report Says (press release)

July 14, 2006

The American National Cholesterol Education Program said last year that people at high risk of heart disease should be treated more aggressively. Aggressively lowering cholesterol means that LDL cholesterol should be lowered to less than 1.81 millimoles per liter of blood (mmol/l) in high-risk individuals. Current guidelines generally recommend 2.56 mmol/l.

According to Uffe Ravnskov, an independent researcher from Lund,

Sweden, achieving this new goal would mean that most of the western world's adult population would be on statins, and doses would have to be more than eight times higher than currently used.

Doses this high would increase both the number and seriousness of side effects, Ravnskov's team contended. Side effects could include heart failure, myalgia and rhabdomyolysis (which destroys muscle tissue), neurological problems and cancers.

In addition, the researchers claimed that clinical trials suggest that higher doses of statins do not lower overall mortality, and side effects are generally under-reported.

Thrombolytic agents - also called 'clot busting drugs', given during a heart attack to break up a blood clot in a coronary artery in order to restore blood flow.

Side effects may include bleeding from cuts, gums, or wounds, fever, low blood pressure, agitation, bloating, blue or purple toes, blurred vision, bruising, changes in facial skin, chest discomfort, chills, confusion, decreased urine output, depression, dizziness, irregular breathing, skin flushing, headache, indigestion, lethargy, muscle cramps or spasms, twitching, nervousness, numbness, pounding in the ears, rapid weight gain, shortness of breath, sweating, swelling of eyes, face, lips, or tongue, unusual tiredness or weakness, vomiting, weakness in arms or legs, and yellow eyes or skin.

Example drugs: Alteplase (Activase), Anistreplase (Eminase), Reteplase (Retavase), Streptokinase (Streptase), Tenecteplase (TNKase), Urokinase (Abbokinase).

Glycoprotein IIb/IIIa Inhibitors - these are antiplatelet medications that work by preventing the blood from clotting during chest pain or a heart attack, or when undergoing surgical or procedural treatment.

Side effects may include bleeding, stomach, intestines, or other internal organs, increased bruising, stomach irritation and allergic reaction.

Example drugs: Abciximab Injection (ReoPro), Eptifibatide (Integrilin), Tirofiban (Aggrastat).

Natural Treatments for Heart Disease

Whereas conventional drugs aim to suppress and stem symptoms, the natural approach aims at containing and even reversing the underlying causes of cardiovascular disease, such as the beginning of atherosclerosis. Nutritional supplements and dietary interventions are generally based on the principles that aim at preventative measures too.

While there are many heart healthy tips we can provide, diet and lifestyle changes and correct nutritional supplementation are categorically the most important tools in the natural treatment of cardiovascular disease.

For example...atherosclerosis can be prevented by developing strong artery walls, by controlling the factors that cause injuries to them and by minimizing the level of fats, lipoproteins, cholesterol and homocysteine build up. All of these areas can be potentially controlled and reversed by nutritional and supplementation methods, where the following ingredients may benefit.

For example...atherosclerosis can be prevented by developing strong artery walls, by controlling the factors that cause injuries to them and by minimizing the level of fats, lipoproteins, cholesterol and homocysteine build up. All of these areas can be potentially controlled and reversed by nutritional and supplementation methods, but the right nutrients need to be used in the right amounts to maintain a healthy heart.

Some of the most effective nutrients, such as the powerful natural enzyme called Nattokinase, have to be taken in an [enteric coated tablet](#) because otherwise they can be destroyed by stomach acid. Nattokinase is clinically proven to help clean arteries and is a powerful anti-clotting agent.

It is just one of the specialised ingredients in Xtend-Life's Cardio-Klenz, more details of which can be found in the recommended products section.

Recommended Products to Keep Your Heart Healthy

Option 1:

If you have or have had any indications that you have a cardiovascular problem then this option is really the minimum that you need to consider. If your symptoms are quite severe you may choose to increase the recommended dose rates below by 50% or even to double them, and/or consider option 2.

Product	Quantity Per Day	You Need
Cardio-Klenz	4 tablets per day	1 bottle per month
Omega 3/DHA Fish Oil	2 soft gels per day	1 bottle per month

Option 2:

If you are serious about maintaining a healthy heart and want to provide the best possible benefits to both your heart and circulatory system, then you would be advised to add Total Balance to your supplement regime as well. This not only gives additional complementary nutrients to the Cardio-Klenz but will also help your other organs do their jobs more effectively and thus indirectly help your heart.

Product	Quantity Per Day	You Need
<u>Cardio-Klenz</u>	4 tablets per day	1 bottle per month
<u>Total Balance</u>	Variable	Variable
<u>Omega 3/DHA Fish Oil Premium</u>	2 soft gels per day	1 bottle per month

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Alternative Healing Academy

[Advanced Color/Crystal Reflexology Practitioner](#) | [Basic Anatomy & Physiology](#) | [Basic Reflexology Practitioner](#)
[Basic Aromatherapy Practitioner](#) | [Advanced Reflexology Practitioner](#) | [Advanced Aromatherapy Practitioner](#)
[Basic Color/Crystal Therapy Practitioner](#) | [Mini Courses](#) | [Advanced ReflexAromatherapy Practitioner](#)

With the increasing popularity of aromatherapy, reflexology, color & crystal therapy and a return to a more holistic lifestyle, people have begun searching for ways to earn more money; expand their skills; improve the health of themselves, friends & family; and increase their knowledge of alternative medicine.

The Alternative Healing Academy has developed several new courses in the holistic health care field for those who would like the opportunity to learn a healing modality at their own pace and in their own homes.

A Doctor of Reflexology with The Alternative Healing Academy is teaching classes with curriculum very similar to the Reflexology Practitioner Course and the Basic Aromatherapy at her local community college.

Our holistic health courses were developed by professionals in the Holistic Health Care field trained in the following modalities: Aromatherapy, Advanced/Master Aromatherapy, Reiki, Tuning Fork Therapy, Color and Crystal Therapy, Homeopathy, Herbalism, and Advanced Reflexology.

Furthermore, since we at the Alternative Healing Academy also realize that not everyone wants to make alternative medicine a career choice, we also offer [basic courses](#) as well as several [Mini Courses](#) which will teach you the skills you need to help improve the health and quality of life for yourself, your family and your friends.

[Check out our Affordable Payment Plans!](#)



All graduates of an Alternative Healing Academy home study course will receive a 20% discount off [AHHA Practitioner Membership](#) if they meet qualifying criteria and join within six months of their graduation date.

About Our Courses

Would you like to learn accurate, detailed aromatherapy, reflexology and/or color & crystal therapy information at your own pace in the comfort of your home? Would you like to become certified in Reflexology, Aromatherapy or Color and Crystal Therapy? An Alternative Healing Academy Distance Learning Course could be what you're looking for...

If you own or work for one of the following:

Natural Foods Store, Aromatherapy Store,
New Age Retail Store, Gift Shop, Herb Store,

Aromatherapy Manufacturer,
Massage Center, Holistic Center, Day Spa, or any type of Salon

If you are a practitioner:

Massage Therapist, Esthetician, Chiropractor, Nurse, Herbalist,
Acupuncturist, Bach Flower Therapist, Body Worker, Reiki,
Doula, Midwife, Energy Worker

If you are interested in personal development or improving the health of yourself and your family - these courses are also for you!

[Advanced Color/Crystal Reflexology Practitioner](#) | [Basic Anatomy & Physiology](#) | [Basic Reflexology Practitioner](#)
[Basic Aromatherapy Practitioner](#) | [Advanced Reflexology Practitioner](#) | [Advanced Aromatherapy Practitioner](#)
[Basic Color/Crystal Therapy Practitioner](#) | [Mini Courses](#) | [Advanced ReflexAromatherapy Practitioner](#)

Common Questions Asked About Holistic Health Distance Learning Courses:

What is Certification?



Most schools will offer an exam that tests the student's knowledge of the material taught in the respective course. Upon successful completion of this exam, a Certificate or Diploma will be issued by the school attesting that the student has successfully met the requirements as specified by that school. The only governmental recognition of Aromatherapy in North America is the occupational title designation granted to the BCAA under the Societies Act of British Columbia.

What is a Certified Aromatherapist or Reflexologist?

Most prospective students want to know whether taking our courses will lead to their becoming 'Certified' in that healing modality, thereby leading to the title of Certified Aromatherapist, Certified Reflexologist or Certified Color/Crystal Therapist. The answer to this really depends on what you mean by 'Certified.' We believe it can be misleading to purport that completing a course in a healing modality such as reflexology, aromatherapy or color/crystal therapy will lead to a designation of 'Certified' Therapist. These are not official

title designations nor are they ones which are recognized by any country's governmental body. All that these titles mean is that this is what an Individual Instructor, School or Institution decided to put on the Diploma it awards those who successfully complete their course.

What is an accredited course in Aromatherapy or Reflexology?

The answer to this will depend on who you are asking. At the present time, British Columbia is the only government to recognize Aromatherapy as a distinct profession and has granted Occupational Title Protection to the members of the BCAA (British Columbia Alliance of Aromatherapy) with the exclusive right for its members to call themselves Registered Aromatherapists (R.A.).

At this time, neither Reflexology nor Color/Crystal Therapy have such occupational designations in any country although one prominent Reflexology school in Colorado, The Modern Institute of Reflexology, has gained occupational designation for their institution in that state. MIR has been designated by the Colorado State Division of Private Occupational Schools - Dept. of Higher Education as an approved school. Our Reflexologist who developed the reflexology modules for our courses was trained at MIR as a Certified Reflexologist, a Master Reflexologist and a Dr. of Reflexology.

In the United States, the NAHA (National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy) has put into place their Approved Standards for Aromatherapy Training. The Alternative Healing Academy's Advanced Aromatherapy course meets and exceeds these standards and we are in the application process of becoming an approved program through the NAHA.

In Canada, there are a number of different Associations including the BCAPA (British Columbia Association of Practicing Aromatherapists) and the CFA (Canadian Federation of Aromatherapists). Time will tell if one authoritative body or association becomes the standard by which to judge and govern the educational offerings of these alternative healing modalities.

It has to be noted that NO form of aromatherapy "certification" is currently recognized in the USA by anyone other than those in the trade, nor is aromatherapy (or essential oils in the aromatherapy trade) regulated by any governmental body.

Some information about the courses we offer:

1) You can receive the course in one of two ways: A cd with the modules and tests in PDF format can be shipped to you; or, The modules can be emailed to you three at a time. Each time you complete the tests for the current three modules, a new set of three modules will be emailed to you.

2) All modules are clearly explained, are in pdf format and fully

illustrated.

3) The Advanced Aromatherapy Practitioner and the Advanced Reflexology Practitioner courses are designed to meet the National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy (NAHA) guidelines.

4) A tutor will be available via email to answer any questions you may have.

You will be contacted after purchase to find out how you would like your course delivered. All tests for the course can be either emailed or snail-mailed to The Alternative Healing Academy.

Upon successful completion of any full diploma or certification course (with a score of 80% or higher), you will receive a beautiful Diploma, suitable for framing.



Course Testimonials

"I'm done! Going through the final and the case studies and having such amazing experiences and opportunities to help people, I truly feel blessed and honored to have had the intense education that came with this course. I discovered in me a new ability to serve others, not only through education but through the power of healing that comes with the use of essential oils. I am continuing to train personally with Alexandria Brighton and have begun work toward opening an aromatherapy practice. Thank you so much for your patience and knowledge. Most of all thank you for this new way of living and enjoying Life."

-A. Lindquist - Advanced Aromatherapy Practitioner

"I am finding the course great. It is written very well so even people like me can understand the human body a whole lot better. I just hope that I can remember it all. I don't think I have a chance of remembering the names of everything in the muscular system or the movement system. But, I do have more of an understanding of how everything works now. I find it just amazing. Thanks Heaps."

-M. Oliver - Basic Anatomy & Physiology

"This information is great that you are teaching. I would really like to talk my oldest daughter into taking your course. It really goes into detail which is very informative."

-Debbie F. - Basic Reflexology

"Seven years ago I started to see a reflexologist for migraines and sinus problems. I was amazed that I finally found relief without medication. I decided this year to search out a course in reflexology so I could help family and friends and show them the benefits of reflexology. I researched various courses on the internet and decided to go with the basic course through the Alternative Healing Academy. I was impressed with course material and the ease of receiving the course material."

"I was given an choice of having a CD sent to me or to receiving and sending back the assignments through email. I choose email. I received 3 lessons at a time that I could read and study on my own time frame and return the lessons when I was done. Everything was sent in a very timely manner and communication was open and quick. If I needed help, I knew it was only a click away and the response time was very quick. The techniques used also came in a video mode in the email that I could replay as much as I needed to."

"I felt I learned a lot and am able to help myself and others. Being able to log 20 hours of treatment time and writing the case histories for the final exam was extremely rewarding and helpful. I would recommend this course to others interested in reflexology because the course material was very informative and complete and written in easy to understand language."

-Jean Russell - Basic Reflexology Course

"I'm so excited about (the Advanced Aromatherapy course) and I'm particularly excited about the possibility of making custom blends for people! I hadn't anticipated having that opportunity when I took the course so I'm excited to have everything done! I'm very excited to have finished. I really enjoyed this course and really appreciate all the work you've put into it! This has been a fabulous jumping off point for me and I'm so glad I took it."

"p.s. I know the boys are much slower at the Reflexology, but my son is loving the classes."

-Megan P. - Advanced Aromatherapy Course

Our Associations

Organizational Member of the American Holistic Health Association - <http://www.ahha.org/>

Professional & Business Member of the National Association of Holistic Aromatherapy - <http://www.naha.org/>

Professional Member of the International Reflexology Association - <http://www.holisticbenefits.com/ima/international-reflexology-association.html>

Professional Member of the International Aromatherapy Association - <http://www.internationalaromatherapyassociation.com/>

Payment plans are available, please [Click Here for More Info](#)

Sales & Refund Policy

We will, within 30 days, refund the purchase price of any course you purchased ***MINUS* the cost of the modules you have already received**. This policy does ***NOT*** apply to our informational Mini Courses. Please see the [Mini Courses page](#) for more information on those. Please [email support](#) if you wish to be refunded or have questions about our refund policy.