



"Improving Your Numbers" Isn't Enough: We Want You To Be Healthy!

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The following is an excerpt from [The Forks Over Knives Plan: How to Transition to the Life-Saving, Whole-Food, Plant-Based Diet](#)

It's not unusual for a person who is sick to go to the doctor, who very often prescribes medications to treat whatever ails the patient. In the case of conditions such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure, these medications will usually improve the patient's elevated numbers, but the medications do not address the underlying sickness. Further, improved numbers can lead to a false sense of security about the condition, which can continue to wreak havoc on the patient's health even while the "numbers" look good.

This is largely the way of modern medicine. Doctors are focused on fixing the indicators of disease and not the disease itself. And that's folly, pure and simple. Consider what it would be like if we treated our car in the same way: If the "check engine" light were on, we would disable the light and think we'd fixed the engine. That would never happen, right? And yet consider heart disease and cholesterol for a moment: How many doctors and pharmaceutical companies speak about high cholesterol as if it's a disease in and of itself? It's not. High cholesterol is an indicator of disease. The disease is sick arteries. Statins will improve your cholesterol numbers, but they will do little for those arteries.

Achieving good biometrics, or "numbers," through healthy living is very different than achieving those same numbers through medication. Let's look at one example and see how a good biometric from healthy living compares to one from medication. Consider the case of blood pressure and risk of heart attack and stroke for a man aged 40 to 59. If the man has high blood pressure and significantly lowers it with medication, he will still have a 20 percent higher chance of having one of these major cardiac events than someone who has a normal blood pressure from healthy living.¹ The reason for this is simple: High blood pressure is an indicator that the cardiovascular system is clogged, and the blood pressure medication does little to address this problem.

As medical doctors, it is incumbent upon us to let our patients know about the safest and most effective treatments. In this case, we want you to unclog your arteries—not merely shut off the indicator light with medicine. And the research informs us how to do this: a low-fat, whole-food, plant-based lifestyle. Virtually all of our patients will achieve a normal blood pressure—and more important, healthy arteries—when they adopt this way of eating. Similarly, if it's high blood sugar from type 2 diabetes, or acid reflux, or any one of a number of chronic conditions, our goal is the same: Make the system as healthy as possible, so it doesn't produce symptoms in the first place. And a healthy system just plain makes you feel better than a medicated one.

¹ Lennart Hansson, "Antihypertensive Treatment: Does the J-Curve Exist?" *Cardiovascular Drugs and Therapy* 14 (August 2000): 367–72.

[The FOK Plan](#)