



NATTO-K—BREAKTHROUGH FOR Cardiovascular Health

by Ken Babal, C.N.

The continuous flow of blood through our vessels both nurtures the body and serves as a vehicle for communication among organs. Circulation of blood bathes tissues and organs with nutrients, oxygen and hormones, and exchanges nutrients for waste products. Chinese medicine teaches that when the circulation is efficient and healthy, a person has a tranquil mind, good memory, clear senses, restful sleep and a robust complexion. Conversely, when the blood is too thick, circulation is poor and stress is placed on the heart.

Science has established the effectiveness of a Mediterranean-style diet along with omega-3 fatty acids, coenzyme Q10, carnitine and other nutrients for helping to protect against heart disease. Recently, a new natural product has taken center stage, showing great potential for cardiovascular health. The product is called nattokinase and is found in Natto-K™ from Enzymedica, the enzyme experts.

A NATURAL ANTI-COAGULANT

Nattokinase is an enzyme derived from a probiotic, bacillus. It is a natural anticoagulant that keeps blood more fluid and promotes healthy circulation by breaking down fibrin, the basic component of blood clots. Nattokinase is virtually nontoxic and could potentially reduce the need for certain drugs that come with serious side effects.

Nattokinase was discovered by Hiroyuki Sumi, M.D., a researcher at the Japan Ministry of Health who was studying blood chemistry at the University of Chicago. He was searching for a natural agent that could successfully dissolve thrombi associated with heart attacks and stroke. Doctor Sumi referred to nattokinase as “the enzyme of enzymes.”

THE RESEARCH

Natto, a fermented Japanese soyfood from which nattokinase was originally derived, has been a popular food in Japanese culture for hundreds of years and is a folk remedy for cardiovascular disease. One study examined the food's effect on healthy Japanese volunteers. In the study, researchers gave 200 grams (about 7 ounces) of natto to the test subjects and then tracked fibrinolytic activity through a series of blood plasma tests. The tests indicated that the natto gener-

ated a heightened ability to support circulation. On average, the time it took to dissolve a clot dropped by 48 percent within two hours of treatment. An additional study showed an 11 percent decrease in blood pressure after just two weeks.

Nattokinase has been shown to reduce the risk of a dangerous condition known as “traveler's syndrome” (deep vein thrombosis). Traveler's syndrome refers to edema and blood clots that develop during long-haul flights due to prolonged bending and compression of veins while seated. One hundred and eighty-six people at high risk of clots who were going on a 7 to 8 hour flight were randomly assigned to receive nattokinase plus pycnogenol (a flavonoid), or placebo. In the placebo group, thrombosis developed in seven subjects, and edema of the lower leg increased by 12 percent on average. In the treated group, no thrombotic events occurred and edema decreased by 15 percent!

THE NATURAL ALTERNATIVE

Many doctors with whom I've shared this information are taking a keen interest in nattokinase as a natural alternative that may improve outcomes in their heart patients. Improved circulation, of course, can have many benefits for people who are not heart patients. Doctors report that nattokinase is often helpful for cold hands and feet and stiff shoulders and joints, and can reduce some complications of diabetes.

SAFETY

Nattokinase is considered safe because it has long been a component of the Asian diet. Because of its thrombolytic activity, please consult a physician when using anticoagulant or antiplatelet drugs with nattokinase.

THE ENZYMEDICA DIFFERENCE

Enzymedica is a leading supplier of non-animal enzyme formulations and is committed to education. Since 80 percent of the enzyme market is now plant-based, they have gained enormous credibility. ■

Ken Babal has a nutrition counseling practice in Los Angeles and is author of several books including *Seafood Sense: The Truth About Seafood Nutrition and Safety* (Basic Health Publications).

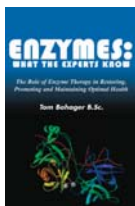
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