

AZR 6/12/98

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Cholesterol clogs faster when it's hot

On rabbits anyway; human testing next

Dallas Morning News

Before you take a hearty bite of that burger and fries, listen to this.

A new study released Thursday found that oxidized cholesterol, which is produced when cholesterol is heated, is more damaging to the arteries than unheated cholesterol.

OK, so you already know cholesterol is bad for you. But this research suggests that fried or processed foods, including meats, eggs and dairy products, further speed up the process of clogging arteries. And although any heating can cause the oxidization, frying is worse than, say, boiling or baking — because frying gets food hotter and exposes it to high temperatures for a longer time.

Oxidized cholesterol is common in Western diets, especially in fast food. It's in the burger and maybe the fries you're eating today.

Researchers report in this month's *Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis and Vascular Biology*, a journal of the American Heart Association, that a two-year study using rabbits showed oxidized cholesterol caused clogged arteries faster than unheated cholesterol. Experts agree that the findings are intriguing but warn against firm conclusions until testing in humans is completed.

Dr. Ilonas Staprans, associate research professor at Veterans Affairs Medical Center in San Francisco, says people probably won't pay much attention to the study — but they should if they care about their health.

Dr. Ishwarlal Jialal, a professor of internal medicine and pathology at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, says that although the findings of the study are important, it is important to remember it was performed on rabbits — not humans.