

The Cardiovascular System - Part 1

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What Does the Cardiovascular System Consist of?

- Heart
- Blood Vessels
 - Veins
 - Arteries
 - Capillaries
- Blood

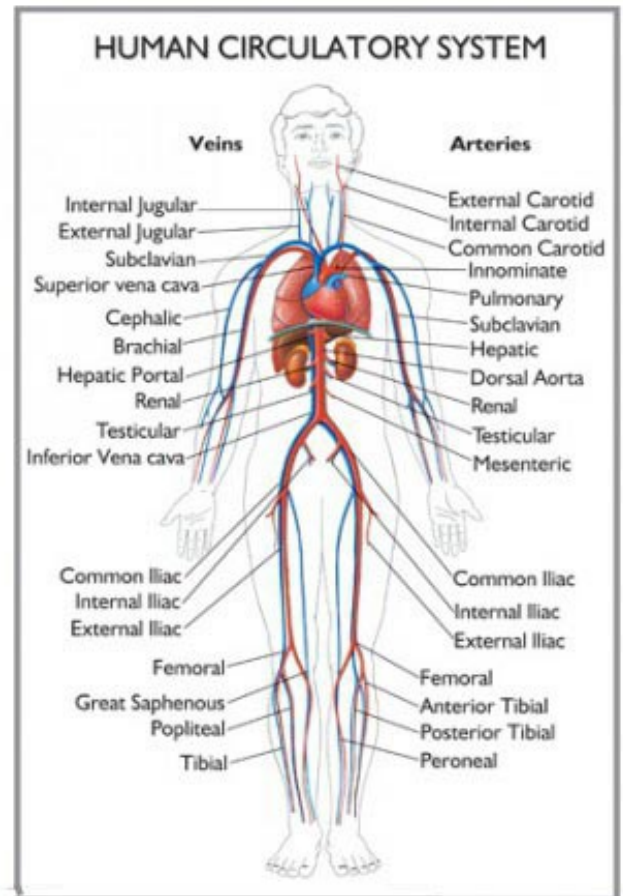
What is the Function of the Cardiovascular System?

The main function of the cardiovascular system is the internal transport of cells and dissolved materials, including gases, wastes and nutrients.

The physical function of the *heart* is to propel blood and maintain blood pressure.

The function of the *blood vessels* is to deliver blood throughout the body. The *arteries* carry oxygen rich blood away from the heart, decreasing in size to become *arterioles* which deliver blood to the *capillaries*. The *veins* carry non-oxygenated blood back to the heart, starting out from the capillaries as smaller *venules*, increasing in size to become veins. Arteries and veins often lay side by side in a narrow band of connective tissue.

The function of the *blood* is to transport oxygen and carbon dioxide, deliver nutrients and hormones, remove waste products and assist in defense against diseases.



Common Acute and Chronic Problems for Cardiovascular System:

Hypertension	Hypotension
Arteriosclerosis	Atherosclerosis
Heart attack	Congestive heart failure
Heart murmur	Tachycardia
Heart flutter/fibrillation	Pericarditis
Stroke	Bradycardia
Arrhythmia	Carditis
Coronary artery disease	Congenital defects

Palpitations	Pancarditis
Paroxysmal tachycardia	Polycythemia
Septicemia	Syncope (fainting)
Varicose veins	Deep vein thrombosis
Peripheral venous disease	Peripheral arterial disease
Reynaud's Phenomenon	Buerger's disease
Blood clots	Vascular stenosis
Hemorrhoid	Hemorrhage

Herbal Applications for the Cardiovascular System:

Extracts	Food
Infusions	Teas

Ways to Maintain Cardiovascular System Health:

- ~ Reduce stress or at least rethink how you perceive stress (watch the TED talk by Kelly McGonigal http://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend?language=en)
- ~ Work to lose weight if you are overweight
- ~ Adjust your diet to reduce unhealthy fats, excess carbohydrates and processed foods
- ~ Exercise several times weekly
- ~ Moderate alcohol consumption
- ~ Quit smoking
- ~ Be aware of any heart disease that runs in the family
- ~ Consume heart healthy herbs to support the cardiovascular system
- ~ Supplement with Coenzyme Q-10 (Co-Q-10) for lowering blood pressure with type II diabetes 60 - 100 mg BID
- ~ Eat foods high in vitamin A, B complex, C, E, zinc, bromeliad and flavonoids.
 - Vitamin A - Liver, carrots, dandelion greens, spinach, parsley, plantain, nettles, other green foods and yellow-orange vegetables
 - Vitamin B complex - Yeast, grains, organ meats, nuts, legumes
 - Vitamin C - Currants, broccoli, rose hips, berries, parsley, brussel sprouts
 - Vitamin E - Extra virgin olive oil, leafy greens, watercress, nuts, egg yolks, wheat germ
 - Zinc - Oysters, whole grains, brewer's yeast, spinach, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds
 - Bromelain - 500 - 750mg TID at 1,500 MCU
 - Flavonoids - Blue-red fruits such as cherries, blueberries, hawthorns, raspberries, strawberries, st. john's wort, calendula, lemons, oranges, rose hips. Rutin, hesperidia and quercetin are examples of flavonoids.
 - Misc foods - okra, oats, beets, artichokes, wheat germ, green leafy vegetables, raw garlic, onions and foods high in lecithin (soybeans, egg yolks, sunflower oil, liver, peanuts, whole grains, milk). Raw garlic, onion and lecithin containing foods help regain and retain elasticity in blood vessels when consumed daily.

Herbs for the Cardiovascular System:*Adaptogenic Herbs*

Astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*)
 Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*)

Alterative Herbs

Black Cohosh (*Actaea racemosa*)
 Burdock (*Arctium lappa*)
 Sassafras (*Sassafras spp.*)

Anti-inflammatory Herbs

Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*)*
 Feverfew (*Chrysanthemum parthenium*)
 Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)
 Horsechestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)
 Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*)
 Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

Antispasmodic Herbs

Cayenne (*Capsicum annuum*)
 Crampbark (*Viburnum opulus*)
 Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)
 Passionflower (*Passiflora spp.*)
 Valerian (*Valerian officinalis*)

Astringent Herbs

Horsechestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)*
 Rose (*Rosa spp.*)
 Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*)
 Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

Cardioactive Herbs

Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*)*
 Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria magalis*)*

Cardiotonic Herbs

Astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*)
 Garlic (*Allium sativa*)
 Hawthorn (*Crataegus spp.*)
 Linden (*Tilia spp.*)
 Motherwort (*Leonuris cardiaca*)

*Extreme low dose botanical. Do not use without guidance of a skilled herbalist.

Circulatory Stimulating Herbs

Cayenne (*Capsicum annuum*)
 Crampbark (*Viburnum opulus*)
 Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)

Diuretic Herbs

Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*)*
 Hawthorn (*Crataegus spp.*)
 Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria magalis*)*
 Linden (*Tilia spp.*)
 Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

Hypotensive Herbs

Crampbark (*Viburnum opulus*)
 Garlic (*Allium sativa*)
 Hawthorn (*Crataegus spp.*)
 Linden (*Tilia spp.*)
 Mistletoe, European (*Viscum album*)*
 Motherwort (*Leonuris cardiaca*)
 Passionflower (*Passiflora spp.*)
 Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

Nervine Herbs

Kava Kava (*Piper methysticum*)
 Linden (*Tilia spp.*)
 Oat (*Avena sativa*)
 Skullcap (*Scutellaria lateriflora*)
 Valerian (*Valerian officinalis*)

Rubefacient Herbs

Cayenne (*Capsicum annuum*)
 Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)

Vasodilator Herbs

Black Cohosh (*Actaea racemosa*)
 Feverfew (*Chrysanthemum parthenium*)
 Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)

Venotonic Herbs

Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*)
 Horsechestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)*
 Gotu Kola (*Centella asiatica*)

Recommended Herbal Books (*indicates available through library loan system):

General Body System Information

- ~ The Gift of Healing Herbs : Plant Medicines and Home Remedies for a Vibrantly Healthy Life by Robin Rose Bennett*
- ~ The Herbal Handbook: A User's Guide to Medical Herbalism by David Hoffmann
- ~ Herbal Medicine From the Heart of the Earth by Sharon Tilgner, N.D.
- ~ The Authentic Herbal Healer by Holly Bellebuono
- ~ Holistic Anatomy by Pip Waller

Cardiovascular System

- ~ Rogers' School of Herbal Medicine Volume 3 - Cardiovascular System by Robert Dale Rogers
- ~ Healthy Heart: Strengthen Your Cardiovascular System Naturally by David Hoffmann*

Emotional and Spiritual Heart

- ~ The Secret Teaching of Plants: The Intelligence of the Heart in the Direct Perception of Nature by Stephen Harrod Buhner

Online Resources

Chris Kesser on Heart Disease and Cholesterol: <http://chriskresser.com/heart-disease/>

David Hoffmann: http://www.healthy.net/Health/Article/Herbal_Therapy_the_Cardiovascular_System/1502
<http://www.healthy.net/scr/article.aspx?id=1582>

Varicose veins: <http://www.healthy.net/scr/article.aspx?id=1287>

David Winston: http://www.herbaltherapeutics.net/media/herbs_and_nutrition_for_cardiovascular_health_and_disease.pdf

<http://www.healthy.net/scr/article.aspx?id=1287>

Paul Bergner: http://www.medherb.com/Therapeutics/Cardiovascular_Herbs_and_hypertension.htm#_VPID_8

CoreyPine Shane: <http://blueridgeschool.org/blog/2009/12/05/getting-the-blood-moving>

Taste receptors found on the heart: <http://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-05-bitter-receptors-human-hearts.html>

Notes
