

Egg consumption and heart health: A review

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Abstract

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. **Until recently, reducing dietary cholesterol has been a part of the American Heart Association (AHA) and American College of Cardiology (ACC) guidelines on lifestyle management, despite inconclusive evidence to support the recommendation.** Considering eggs are a rich source of dietary cholesterol (typically containing 141-234 mg per egg), individuals with increased risk for CVD are advised not to consume eggs. Furthermore, based on the 2012 AHA/ACC guidelines, individuals with lower risk for CVD have previously been advised to avoid consuming eggs due to the high content of dietary cholesterol. Rather than strictly limiting cholesterol intake, the AHA and ACC guidelines now recommend dietary patterns that emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, poultry, fish, and nuts as an approach to favorably alter blood lipid levels. Of note, the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans have removed the recommendation of limiting cholesterol intake to no more than 300 mg per day; however, the guidelines advise that individuals should eat as little dietary cholesterol as possible while consuming a healthy eating pattern. The purpose of this review is to summarize the documented health risks of egg consumption in individuals with low and high risk for CVD and determine whether current recommendations are warranted based on the available literature. We also aim to provide guidance for future studies that will help further elucidate the health modulating effect of eggs.

Keywords: Blood lipids; Cardiovascular disease; Dietary cholesterol; Dietary guidelines; Eggs.

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