Power Supplement: Nattokinase

By Michael Turner M.D.

Greetings Friends!

As an Integrative Physician with a passion for natural measures, I am excited to share with you the third installment in a series of articles we call “Power Supplements”. The goal is to educate and inspire you towards optimal health, with an emphasis always on natural, inexpensive, and practical ideas.

So what’s next? **Nattokinase**.

The story of nattokinase begins with a fermented soybean product called “natto” that the Japanese have consumed for centuries, with purported health benefits.

Turns out they were right — with many of the health benefits attributable to an enzyme found within called "nattokinase".

Nattokinase has *so many* health benefits — particularly for the cardiovascular system — that I consider it a top 3 supplement that every human being should be taking. (I take it everyday and even take it on vacations.. I know, I'm a geek).

Reasons we love nattokinase:

1. Produces beneficial changes to all aspects of your cholesterol levels.

There are 3 main parts of your cholesterol panel: triglycerides, HDL and LDL. Turns out that nattokinase produces favorable changes *in all three* (triglycerides and LDL go down; HDL goes up). (**Read more here**)

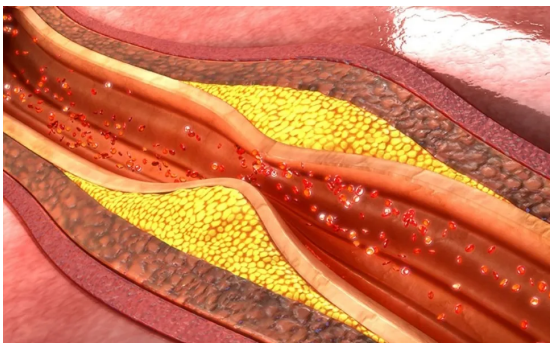
- My favorite talk explaining cholesterol levels: **watch here**
- Why is there so much controversy about cholesterol and heart disease? **watch here**
- Challenging talk describing goal LDL targets: **watch here**

But even better....

2. Actually shown to reverse atherosclerosis.

People come to me all the time for anti-aging advice: You know what I tell them? The single most important anti-aging concept — ahead of hormones, ahead of cancer screening, ahead of any single exercise or diet — is ***the health of your blood vessels*** (aka "cardiovascular health").

Why? Because cardiovascular health is responsible for *2 of the top 3 leading causes of death* (heart attacks and strokes) and because the function of *every other organ system* in your body depends on a sufficient level of blood flow.

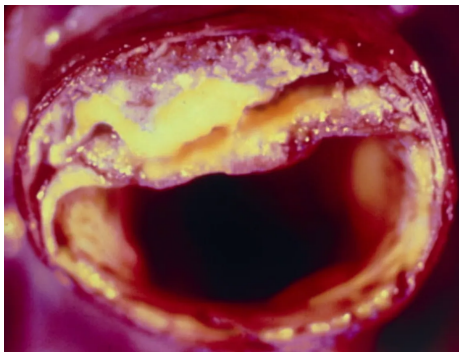


Atherosclerosis (aka “hardening of the arteries”) is the pathologic condition describing damage to the artery walls, progressive cholesterol and calcium deposition, inflammation, narrowing, and propensity for clotting.

- Great video of atherosclerosis: **click here**

There are multiple factors that conspire to drive atherosclerosis (inflammation, high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, lack of exercise, to name a few) but the most important of these is *circulating cholesterol levels*.

Here’s the million-dollar question: Can it be reversed? Once you have created arterial damage, can it resolve and heal? Or only be slowed?



Landmark intervention programs (including the **Ornish method** and **Dr. Esselstyn’s program** at Cleveland Clinic) have already answered that question. Now along comes nattokinase to contribute to the discussion — with surprising results like **this study** showing regression of atherosclerosis in the carotid artery *superior to statin therapy*.

3. Lowers blood pressure.

Pop Quiz: What’s the single greatest risk factor for a stroke?

Answer: high blood pressure

4. Thins the blood (like aspirin) and also dissolves blood clots.

Amazing… This is why it is being investigated in Japan for use with stroke victims.

- Complete summary of Nattokinase for cardiovascular health: **read here**

And now, moving on to everyone's least-favorite 5-letter word...

5. COVID: It dissolves spike protein and dissolves blood clots.

By now I suspect you know how nasty the SARS-COV2 spike protein is — that it is not just the way the virus *enters* cells, but the main way the virus *actually damages* your body. (Thus, the vaccines are a disaster because their mRNA instructions tell your cells to create spike protein — of unknown quantity, for an unknown duration.)

One of the chief problems is that spike proteins promote blood clotting. So, what if we could take something that would directly dissolve spike protein *on contact*? And also *dissolve any clots* that have already formed?

Exactly. (**read here**)

6. COVID: It may help prevent infection.

Since the spike protein is the mechanism for viral entry into your cells, and since nattokinase dissolves spike, it stands to reason it has a role in preventing infection.

In fact — voila! — this research showed exactly that: nattokinase effectively stopped SARS-CoV-2 infection of human cells in culture. (**read here**)

Conclusion

How much should I take? There is a range... Dr. McCullough recommends 4,000 fu 2x a day...The study that showed reversal of carotid artherosclerosis used 6,000 fu once a day. (NB: take on an ***empty stomach*** for best absorption.)

Any cautions?

1) Soy allergies. (Although I found a brand of **soy-free nattokinase here**.)

2) People with bleeding disorders or taking blood-thinning medications. (These are *cautions*, not absolute prohibitions.)

- Note: perfectly fine to take in addition to aspirin. (I take an aspirin and 6,000 fu of nattokinase every single day.)
- Note: may still be fine to take even if you are on strong blood thinners, you just need to monitor certain labs (**PT, INR, PTT**) to make sure your blood is not too thin.
- Clinical signs of excessive blood thinning = gums bleed easily, easy bruising, capillary rupture in eyes, easy nosebleeds.
- Nattokinase has undergone safety testing in doses up to 80,000 fibrinolytic units (FU) daily.

Where can I get some?

Here is my **best brand recommendation** (availability, quality, potency and cost).

Postscript:

People also mention other fibrinolytic enzymes like serrapeptase or bromelain. These are definitely helpful as possible adjuncts or alternatives. So far, in my personal use and clinical practice, I have focused on nattokinase because I have found it to be the most extensively studied.

Yours In Health and Wellness,

Dr. Turner

Contact Dr. Turner: 509-349-3010 -- office@michaelturnermd.com

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