

## **ANGER AND HEALTH RESEARCH REPORT**

### **Anger Leads to Heart Disease:**

- **A very angry person is three times more likely to have a heart attack than a person who is not angry.**

According to an article in the Harvard Mental Health Letter, published by Harvard University, June, 2002, when you get angry and hate someone, your heart rate and blood pressure go up, causing heart disease and hypertension.

- **Men who already have a history of heart disease are far more likely to have another heart attack if they have high hostility levels.**

In a study reported by the St. John's University School of Medicine on March 15, 2006 (See [www.stjohnsuniversity.edu](http://www.stjohnsuniversity.edu) "Hostility is Predictor of Current Heart Attacks..."), researchers performed psychological tests on men who had already had a heart attack to determine their anger levels. The researchers then followed the men for four years and found that the ones who were classified as angry were much more likely to have another heart attack than the men who were not angry.

- **Married couples whose communications are hostile and angry are far more likely to have hardening of the arteries, which leads directly to heart attacks, than those whose communications are not hostile.**

A study conducted at the University of Utah and reported by BBC News on March 4, 2006, showed that there is a direct relationship between angry and hostile communications and hardening of the arteries (arteriosclerosis). Professor Tim Smith, who led the research, was quoted in the article as saying, "Disagreements are an unavoidable fact of relationships. But the way we talk during disagreements gives us an opportunity to do something healthy." See [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) "Health – Marital Rows Harm Heart Health."

## **Anger Shortens Your Life:**

- **Emotional pressures, such as anger and hostility, release chemicals into the body that are dangerous to your health.**

The British Heart Foundation head of medical information was quoted as saying that anger causes your body to produce chemicals that are harmful to your health, in the BBC News article, "Marital Rows Harm Heart Health" (March 4, 2006).

"Angry words can be as deadly as sticks and stones," says Edward C. Suarez, PhD, of Duke University Medical Center (October 27, 1998, *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*). Hostility, meaning verbal or physical expression of anger and an antagonistic personal style, was the strongest predictor of heart disease. Overall, angry people had higher cholesterol than people who were not hostile.

- **Anger causes your body to reduce its production of healthy hormones that prevent aging.**

According too Dr. Stephen Cherniske, author of The Metabolic Anti-Aging Plan, June, 2003, DHEA, which helps us to stay youthful and live longer, goes down when people are angry and hostile.

## **Anger Can Cause Accidents and Injuries:**

- **Being angry, enraged or furious makes you more likely to be injured.**

A study described by Randy Dotinga in Health Day News, January 31, 2006, a survey of injured men in emergency rooms showed that they were more likely to report that they were mad or furious at the time of their injury than they would be in a normal day.

- **Expressing anger makes rage problems worse.**

In Anger Buster 101, published in 2002, Newton Hightower summarizes many medical studies on the physical effects of anger, which causes biochemical changes in your body, leading to many physical ailments. People who rage a lot have more health problems than people who don't. Moreover, according to

Hightower, rage is a drug – the more you rage, the more you need to rage. He describes how anger expression and raging meets all the criteria of an addiction. **Psychological theories that say it's good to express anger are misleading, because expressing anger doesn't make it go away; it makes it worse.**

- **Anger and hostility lead to many physical, mental and social problems.**

The Yahoo Health article on anger describes the difference between anger and hostility, and discusses the effects of anger and hostility. This article is by Sydney Youngerman-Cole, RN, BSN, RNC, last updated April 27, 2005. Reviewed by William M. Green, M.D., and Lisa S. Weinstock, M.D., Psychiatry. Getting angry frequently leads to isolation and feelings of low self-esteem, because people will tend to avoid you. Anger is an appropriate response to some situations. **Hostility means being ready for a fight all the time.** Frequent anger and hostility are detrimental to your health. They keep your blood pressure high, and increase your risk for depression, heart attack, stroke, and other illnesses. **Teenagers with high levels of anger and hostility also have higher levels of anxiety, stress, sadness and fatigue. They tend to have more problems with alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, and eating disorders.**