



Homocysteine Not Dead

A report published today within the Heartzine Magazine (heartzine.com, London), casts doubt upon whether, despite pronouncements of death by the authors of the NORVIT study last month, Homocysteine is still an important research focus. The commentary by Dr. J. David Spence of the Stroke Prevention & Atherosclerosis Research Centre, Robarts Research Institute, London, Canada presents an encouraging overview of the state of research on Homocysteine today, one of the more widely debated issues in cardiology and cardiovascular physiology.

Homocysteine is thought to be released following ingestion of meats, and high levels of it within the blood stream are a risk factor for various forms of cardiovascular disorder, enabling its use as marker for the development of coronary artery disease. Whilst homocysteine can be a treatable symptom of vitamin deficiencies, whether it should be targeted for reduction in cases of cardiovascular disease as part of a treatment program has been a contentious issue.

Being recognised as a marker of heart disease does not mean that reducing the marker will reduce the risk of heart disease, despite the fact that it will change the outcome of risk analysis based upon its level. In this case, it may be that addressing low Homocysteine with vitamin therapy, as was tested in the NORVIT study, is not helping the patient with recovery or heart disease risk despite encouraging trends in analysis results. It is also important that a gene or number of genes responsible for the high Homocysteine level are identified, as they may have a closer link to the pathogenesis of coronary artery or other forms of cardiovascular disease.

Reference: <http://www.heartzine.com/292-Homocysteine+spence+norvit.html>