

A Life of Hope

By Hap Hansen

As they age, most Americans are concerned about their health. We all hope that good health remains with us for many years. Some of us go overboard when health issues are discussed. It is unfortunate that some conversations among old friends begin with the words, "What's your cholesterol count?" Twenty years ago, most of us didn't know what cholesterol was, much less know how many milliliters of cholesterol per deciliter of blood we had coursing through our veins. Now, we hope for the best. I still am not sure what cholesterol is, but I sure know the amount I have in my bloodstream! There are even times when I am introduced to someone that I am tempted to say, "How do you do! My cholesterol count is only 195, isn't that wonderful?" The problem is that the individual would probably respond with, "Well, my HDL's far exceed my LDL's and besides, I'll bet my triglycerides are lower than your triglycerides."

High density lipoproteins, or HDL's, are apparently good for one's longevity, while the low density stuff lurks in one's arteries just waiting for friends of similar low life to stop by and linger in a clump. I hope not! Causing the problem is that clump of stuff that too many of us have because we ate eggs every morning of our lives. Medical articles and Doctors suggest that eating large amounts of oat bran will discourage those low-lives from clump-gathering, thereby unplugging arteries and leading to a longer life. We can all hope so. I've eaten so much oat bran in the last ten years that I am beginning to whinny in the mornings! Besides, I'm not sure that I will have a longer life or if it's just going to seem that I will. Be careful what you hope for!

Now, doctors are beginning to wonder if cholesterol really is the culprit. Indeed, did all those millions of chickens lay their eggs in vain? What if a new study emerges that says, in effect, "Eat an egg a day and keep the Doctor away!" What if they discover that eating oat bran causes a loss of horse sense? Well, not likely. But it would be nice to enjoy, without guilt, a nice piece of well marbled prime rib smothered in mushrooms and butter, a large order of fries (deep fried in lard, of course), and then top it all off with a dish of high butterfat chocolate ice cream. Well, probably not. But I can still hope! I'll just continue eating small amounts of lean beef, skinless chicken and tasteless vegetables plus a great deal of oat bran. But I had better live a long time, or I'm really going to be upset. Wait a minute! I have already lived a long time! What's next?