

# **Are You A Walking Time Bomb?** **High Blood Pressure, The Silent Killer:**

***Tom Venuto Interviews Frank Mangano About  
The Best Natural Ways To Lower Your Blood Pressure,  
Reduce Your Waistline And Take Back Your Health***



**Tom Venuto,  
Weight Loss Expert  
Author & Success Coach**



**Frank Mangano,  
Blood Pressure Expert  
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## **Medical Disclaimer**

The information within this interview is intended as reference material only and not as medical or professional advice. Information contained herein is intended to give you the tools to make informed decisions about your lifestyle and health. It should not be used as a substitute for any treatment that has been prescribed or recommended by your doctor.

Tom Venuto and Frank Mangano are not healthcare professionals, and expressly disclaim any responsibility for any adverse effects occurring as a result of use of the suggestions or information herein. This interview is offered as current information available about high blood pressure (hypertension) and health management for your own education and enjoyment. If you suspect you have high blood pressure, it is imperative that you seek medical attention. And, as always, never begin a dietary or exercise program without first consulting with a qualified healthcare professional.

**Tom Venuto:** Today my guest is Frank Mangano, who is the author of [\*The Silent Killer Exposed\*](#), which is the best selling e-book on the net on the subject of natural ways to reduce your blood pressure, and that website is: [www.TheSilentKillerExposed.com](http://www.TheSilentKillerExposed.com)

Now this is a subject I'm passionate about for a couple reasons. First, because the issue goes hand-in-hand with the obesity issue, which is my primary area of research and expertise and second, because I'm not only an advocate of *losing fat and developing your body* without drugs, but also an advocate of *improving your health* in natural ways without drugs, whenever that is possible.

Your health is absolutely your greatest wealth because everything else in your life is meaningless if you don't have your health. You have to put your own health at the very top of your life priority list. You can't spend quality time with your family or advance your career, or enjoy anything else in life if you're laid up in a hospital bed... or worse.

As a natural bodybuilder and fat loss coach, I'm interested not only in being muscular and having six pack abs and so on, but also feeling great and enjoying great health. What good is it to look great on the outside when you're a mess on the inside, right? So when I say the word natural, I'm referring not only to saying no to steroids and weight loss drugs, but also staying away from other drugs, if those drugs are being used as a means of treating symptoms and not addressing causes, and if there's an alternative.

First off, before we get into talking about this problem of high blood pressure, how it relates to the obesity problem and what are some natural approaches to fixing it, let me just back up for a minute and explain how I found out about Frank.

For many years, I was the manager of a chain of health clubs here in the New Jersey and New York Metropolitan area, and I met Frank because coincidentally, he was a member of one of our health clubs located in Brooklyn. At the time, I had no idea he was a natural health book author and expert on blood pressure, he was just one of the guys at the gym. It was only later that he found my [Burn The Fat.com](http://BurnTheFat.com) website by accident and mentioned that he also had a website dedicated to natural approaches to better health, and that's how we originally connected.

So Frank, thank you for this interview and why don't we get started by you telling us about your background. Specifically, what made you take an interest in researching this subject – was it an academic interest, or was it personal, like did you or a family member have high blood pressure, or was it something else?

**Frank Mangano:** Hey Tom, it's a pleasure to do this interview with you. Before I answer that, I just want to add that I couldn't agree more with what you said about "health is wealth." The statement is so important and so true.

I also want to point out something before we get into a discussion about health. The information we discuss here is intended as reference material and to open the door to a discussion between patients and their doctors about

alternative means of managing blood pressure. It is however my opinion that if someone with hypertension wants to lower their blood pressure, it can be done in a natural way and without the same adverse side effects you often get with drugs. This is not intended as medical or professional advice but as a way to give people the tools to make informed decisions about their lifestyle and health. It should not be used as a substitute for any treatment that has been prescribed or recommended by your doctor. If you are currently taking medication for the treatment of high blood pressure (hypertension) then continue to do so unless advised by your doctor to do otherwise. The same is true of the book. I am not a healthcare professional. If you have been told by a healthcare professional that you have high blood pressure, or if you have taken a blood pressure reading at a pharmacy or at home that is within the range of what is considered high blood pressure, then it is imperative that you seek medical attention and the advice of your healthcare provider. As always, never begin a dietary or exercise program without first consulting with a qualified healthcare professional.

As for my research, it all started when my mom was diagnosed with high cholesterol. She was afraid of taking statin drugs, and with good reason. She came to me for help and asked me what I thought she could do to avoid taking prescription medications. And so my research began. But I didn't go right out looking for a solution, I first wanted to know everything there was to know about high cholesterol, so I started reading and studying all the information I could find on the topic. Once I understood it completely, my research expanded into what specifically could be done to lower it naturally.

I took what I learned and created a plan for my mom based strictly on hard science. The end result is that her LDL – which is the bad cholesterol - dropped almost 40 points. Because of this she was able to avoid taking prescription drugs. This was very exciting for me – obviously – because this was my mom, but also because this led to my first book which is called, [\*\*“The 60 Day Prescription Free Cholesterol Cure.”\*\*](#)

According to my research, I discovered that many times, although not always, people who had high cholesterol also had “hypertension”, better known as high blood pressure. At that point I wanted to be sure my mom wouldn’t develop high blood pressure and so I started researching again.

Ever since I released my first book, I’ve been on a mission to find solutions for people who want to improve the quality of their lives, without chemical drugs. Often times, doctors will write a prescription for some drug that the profit-minded pharmaceutical companies are pushing when the drug isn’t even necessary! Whatever happened to good nutrition and exercise?

**Tom Venuto:** Good nutrition and exercise - AMEN to that! When was the last time your doctor took out that prescription pad and wrote: weight lifting 3 times a week, and do cardio or go for a walk every day for 30 minutes? Okay, would you give a real quick definition of what high blood pressure is and how someone would know if they have it?

**Frank Mangano:** Sure. High blood pressure is simply the amount of force the blood puts on your arteries as it passes through them. Your blood pressure doesn’t stay steady throughout the day - it rises and falls. When

your blood pressure stays elevated over time, you are said to have high blood pressure. Here's the disturbing part, Tom. Although some people may get headaches, dizziness, or blurred vision, high blood pressure often has no signs or symptoms. That's why it's also known as "The Silent Killer."

**Tom Venuto:** So what is the best method for detection, aren't there any outward warning signs or is the only way to check in with your doctor at regular intervals and get your blood pressure taken regularly?

**Frank Mangano:** The surefire way to find out is to get tested. Your doctor can easily tell if your blood pressure is high by using what's known as a sphygmomanometer, which is the instrument for measuring blood pressure in the arteries. This device consists of a pressure gauge and a rubber cuff that wraps around your upper arm and inflates to constrict the arteries.

**Tom Venuto:** Is it a good idea to test your own blood pressure at home, and if so is there any special equipment you recommend?

**Frank Mangano:** Home testing is a very good idea, especially if you are concerned that you might have high blood pressure or if you have a family history of it. I highly recommend home testing. Although the digital (wrist cuff) blood pressure monitors are the easiest to use, I recommend using a manual blood pressure monitor for home testing. The manual monitors are similar to those that your doctor may use and usually they are more accurate than the digital (wrist cuff) monitors. A manual monitor, also known as a sphygmomanometer, will include an arm cuff, a squeeze bulb, stethoscope and a gauge to measure the pressure.

**Tom Venuto:** Ok, let me ask you another question. I see a lot of attention in the media about the obesity problem, quite a bit about diabetes, but not nearly as much about high blood pressure. Is it not that serious in comparison? Just how bad and how widespread is the high blood pressure problem?

**Frank Mangano:** Tom, it's very serious. I hope you're sitting down because what I'm about to tell you is going to shock you. The fact is that nearly one billion – yes, I said one billion - people worldwide have high blood pressure! A recent study predicted that this number will increase to 1.56 billion people by 2025. Those are staggering numbers, to say the least.

**Tom Venuto:** Scary, actually, that puts it right up there with obesity – one billion people. I guess one reason that obesity gets more headlines and even reality TV shows – and high blood pressure doesn't, is because with obesity, you wear your problem and it's a deeply emotional problem, whereas high blood pressure is not a cosmetic problem – like you say in the title of your book – it's silent, but it's still a killer. That probably makes it even more dangerous. If someone has high blood pressure and they don't do anything about it what are the potential consequences?

**Frank Mangano:** Left untreated, high blood pressure will increase the risk of kidney damage, eye damage, hardening of the arteries (atherosclerosis or arteriosclerosis), heart attack, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases. The cause of 3 out of 5 cases of heart failure in women is high blood pressure.

**Tom Venuto:** Let's talk about causes. I think one of the huge mistakes people make in their journeys to lose weight and to become healthier is that they see symptoms and then they only take steps to treat the symptoms, without addressing the causes. What causes high blood pressure?

**Frank Mangano:** Well Tom, high blood pressure doesn't discriminate and it can happen to anyone at any age. Since several factors and conditions play a role, it's difficult to identify a specific cause. The healthcare profession doesn't claim to know the cause of high blood pressure, but they do know that certain factors play a contributing role in its development.

**Tom Venuto:** Okay, so what are some of the factors that would give us some clue about whether you're at risk and just how much risk?

**Frank Mangano:** There are a lot of factors that contribute to high blood pressure including but not limited to, smoking, lack of physical activity, obesity, high sodium intake, high cholesterol, excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages, and of course, heredity. Diabetes patients are also at greater risk for developing high blood pressure and other cardiovascular diseases. Also, African-Americans seem to be at a greater risk of developing high blood pressure at an early age.

**Tom Venuto:** How much of this is genetics? If you have the predisposition are you just – to put it bluntly – basically are you screwed?

**Frank Mangano:** Your family history plays a role, but there are many things you can do to prevent or reduce high blood pressure even if you have genes that might make you more likely to have it.

**Tom Venuto:** I read something recently that you could say is pretty depressing and it came straight from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Pressure Institute (NHLBPI), and let me read this word for word, it said, “Once high blood pressure develops, it usually lasts a lifetime.” Well, the reason I say that’s depressing is because from my studies on the mind and psychology I know that when someone believes their problem is permanent, they tend to feel hopeless and then act helpless.

I’ve been working in the weight loss business my entire life and I’ve seen so many overweight men and women with high blood pressure lose weight, and then watch their blood pressure come down and it stayed down as long as they maintained a healthy weight. So why would the NHLBPI say something like this? What’s your take on this? Can high blood pressure be permanently cured or only controlled and what does the word “controlled” mean anyway?

**Frank Mangano:** What the NHLBPI is implying is that blood pressure is usually something that, if you are treating it only with medication, you’re likely to be on medication for a lifetime. That’s not to say you must be on medication. If people work to maintain a healthy weight, they can significantly lower their blood pressure and often go off the medication. This is why early monitoring and detection is important. You can control many of the risk factors before your blood pressure gets to dangerously high

levels. Blood pressure itself is not a disease that needs to be cured, but high blood pressure is reaching epidemic proportions. We need the right amount of pressure to circulate the blood throughout the body. It does, however, need to be controlled so that blood pressure that is too low doesn't deprive the body of oxygen and nutrients and blood pressure that is too high doesn't strain the heart and blood vessels.

**Tom Venuto:** What is the actual relationship between high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease? Is high blood pressure literally the direct cause of strokes or heart attacks?

**Frank Mangano:** There's a strong link between the two. The extra work the heart must do to push the blood through the body will eventually take its toll on the heart and arteries. High blood pressure creates a buildup in the arteries and therefore damages the arteries. As a result this greatly increases the risk for cardiovascular disease.

**Tom Venuto:** What's the relationship between age and high blood pressure? Should we automatically assume that our blood pressure is going to go up as we age?

**Frank Mangano:** Age is a major contributor, but getting high blood pressure is NOT considered a normal, healthy part of aging. It may just be the result of a diet lacking in essential nutrients and/or a sedentary lifestyle.

**Tom Venuto:** I agree. I co-authored a book on healthy aging called [Fit Over 40](#), and I have a lot of interest in this topic. People seem to think

that everything automatically goes downhill after age 40, but muscle loss and gain in body fat that comes with age actually isn't so much a result of age after all. It's the same thing you said with blood pressure – it's mostly a result of poor diet and inactivity – basically, “Use it or lose it.”

Alright, next topic. Stress. Even when you just say the word stress, you get images or feelings of your blood boiling, and that's an interesting aphorism too, isn't it, blood boiling? What does stress have to do with blood pressure?

**Frank Mangano:** It's important to understand that when stress is ongoing, so is the higher blood pressure level. In other words, by keeping stress at an elevated level, you're keeping your blood pressure elevated also which, over time, will cause some serious health issues.

**Tom Venuto:** I agree 110%. Stress is a normal part of life - it's the nonstop stress without recovery that causes the problems. The next question is what should we do about stress? What are some practical steps we can take today to reduce the stress in our lives, and what can someone who is hypertensive expect by making these changes?

**Frank Mangano:** In today's day and age, it's almost impossible to live a stress free life, but there are plenty of steps you can take to reduce stress such as walking, meditating or listening to relaxing music to take the edge off a stressful day. I can't emphasize enough the importance of making time for decompressing each and every day. The key is consistency. Follow these simple steps on a daily basis and you can expect to see improvement in the numbers.

**Tom Venuto:** Okay, now here is a question that is going to be of great interest to the listeners in my audience. What is the relationship between blood pressure and obesity? Is it a direct relationship? If you're overweight, does your blood pressure necessarily go up right in line with your weight, or does only the probability of hypertension increase? And what if you're obese or even morbidly obese? Are you virtually guaranteed to have high blood pressure?

**Frank Mangano:** Being extremely overweight or obese and having high blood pressure are so closely related that it has even been given its own name: obesity hypertension. Of all the cases of hypertension in the U.S., 75% can be directly attributed to obesity. Deaths directly from hypertension or that had high blood pressure as a primary contributor totaled 310,707 in the U.S. in 2002. It's a chain reaction: obesity=hypertension= heart disease=death and that all begins with how fat a person is.

It's not just how much you are overweight, but also where you carry your extra weight that can have a great impact on blood pressure. Risk factors are increased when added weight is in the abdominal area. This is because people with a so-called spare tire also have increases in blood sugar, which causes the fat to be deposited there. To summarize, there is a significant risk factor for developing high blood pressure if you're obese.

**Tom Venuto:** Yes, and I think it's worth emphasizing the part about abdominal obesity because abdominal obesity, which is a waist measurement of 35 inches or more for women or 40 inches or more for men, combined with high blood pressure are both part of a group of risk factors

called metabolic syndrome or syndrome X. If you have metabolic syndrome, you're at risk for some serious health problems. So let's take that situation in reverse. If you're obese and you start losing weight are you guaranteed that your blood pressure going to drop?

**Frank Mangano:** There's a direct correlation between obesity and hypertension, so it makes perfect sense that losing weight can lower blood pressure. The proof is in the numbers. Blood pressure is measured in mm/hg. A reading of blood pressure as the heart beats and as it relaxes, creates the dual number of  $X$  over  $Y$  giving you your final blood pressure reading. For every 2.2 pounds of weight lost, blood pressure falls 1 mm/hg. Of course, this is just one very positive byproduct of weight loss.

**Tom Venuto.** Okay, so we've talked mostly about the problem, although we talked a little bit about stress relief and losing weight as two potential solutions, let's start talking about even more solutions now. I've read your book and I'm also familiar with the Dietary Approaches To Stop Hypertension, also known as DASH, so we know there's not just one, but many different strategies for reducing blood pressure naturally, and in fact it may be ideal to combine several strategies to get the best results, but let me ask you, if you were consulting someone that had high blood pressure, what would be the ONE single most important step to take right now, today, the second they finish listening to this interview, that would make the biggest difference of all?

**Frank Mangano:** That's a great question, Tom. The very first thing I recommend to my clients is to begin by evaluating their daily regimen and

immediately start planning some permanent lifestyle changes. Planning is the key to achieving those healthy numbers. I'm such a believer in this that I have a "60-Day Plan" in my [silent killer exposed e-book](#), which helps my clients build a solid plan to help them reach their goal. It's important to slowly incorporate your changes so you stick with them. Focus only on one change at a time. Eventually, each small change will add up to bigger results.

**Tom Venuto:** You know, that seems like the most obvious step – planning – but I don't think that's what most people were expecting to hear, but I agree 100% and I think it's great advice. I tell my clients the same thing about training and fat loss- put your goals in writing and map out your plan first, but most people want one single magic bullet type answer, some type of easy overnight solution that doesn't require work or thought, but it's not that simple is it?

When most people talk about reducing high blood pressure, the very first thing that pops into their mind is sodium intake. In fact, if you surveyed 100 people off the street, I bet 99 of them would bring up sodium in a conversation about high blood pressure. But if I understand this correctly, the role of sodium is misunderstood and although sodium is definitely a contributing factor, reducing blood pressure is not quite as simple as just cutting down or cutting out sodium. Is that correct and would you tell us about the relationship between sodium and blood pressure and what your recommendations are for sodium intake?

**Frank Mangano:** Very true, Tom. Sodium may be just one part of the problem but it's important to know that excessive salt in the diet has been linked with hypertension. Sodium is hidden in packaged foods and in higher quantities that you may be aware of. I don't suggest totally eliminating sodium from your diet, as that can be dangerous in itself.

Sodium is a mineral nutrient found in nearly all foods and exists in a balance with potassium that is critical for the normal functioning of every living cell. It's also interesting to note that eating unprocessed fruits, vegetables, meat, and fish provides all the sodium your body needs (about 500 mg a day). My recommendation for sodium intake is no more than 2400 mg per day and this is especially for individuals with high blood pressure.

**Tom Venuto:** Frank, I love my Starbucks – in moderation of course – and I drink mostly the organic stuff too, but I don't really want to give up my cup or two a day. I don't have high blood pressure, but if someone has high blood pressure, is caffeine off limits?

**Frank Mangano:** I know what you mean Tom – I enjoy my coffee too. Here's the deal; caffeine does raise blood pressure but only temporarily. So you should be able to continue to have drinks that contain caffeine, unless you are sensitive to it or if you have heart disease and your doctor tells you not to have any. In a nutshell, you shouldn't have to completely give it up, however I recommend drinking coffee in strict moderation if you have high blood pressure. That goes for the cola drinks too, because even if some brands don't have as much caffeine as coffee, they are a hidden source of sodium. Remember, if you're one of those people who keep a constant flow

of caffeine in your system, you're not giving your blood pressure much of a chance to go down.

**Tom Venuto:** Anything else in the diet that people with high blood pressure should avoid?

**Frank Mangano:** Absolutely. For starters, alcohol should only be consumed in moderation. I'm serious about this. The American Heart Institute also says that more than three drinks per day can raise blood pressure. Don't go overboard. If you're a smoker, do I really need to get into specifics on why you should quit smoking right here, right now? Smoking not only contributes to heart disease, stroke and cancer but also increases blood pressure, at least temporarily. I highly recommend that you seek professional help if you can't quit on your own. Your heart will thank you for it.

**Tom Venuto:** It's crazy how many people still smoke, isn't it? What else, without giving away everything that's in your book, are a few other non-drug ways to reduce high blood pressure?

**Frank Mangano:** Tom, I know you'll agree with me when I say that you just can't say enough good things about exercise! Did you know that walking could actually be more beneficial for high blood pressure in the long run than strenuous exercise? If you ask me, that's fantastic news because not everyone is going to be able to start a vigorous exercise program! Just 30 minutes per day can make a positive impact. Try recruiting a friend to walk with or if you have a dog, take him or her with you on the

walks! I also recommend using different routes so it doesn't get boring. You can also bring a Walkman to listen to some of your favorite tunes. I'm a big oldies fan Tom so I enjoy bringing a CD packed with oldies hits!

Another way to be proactive is to drink water. Water is a great way to cleanse and refresh every part of the body, even your blood vessels. Many of the drugs prescribed to lower blood pressure are basically diuretics. Water is a natural diuretic. Drink 8-10 glasses each day to flush out excess salt and toxins that make their way into the blood stream. You can use water to replace some drinks containing caffeine that temporarily raise blood pressure.

**Tom Venuto:** I don't think we can emphasize the exercise part enough. Everyone wants the magic solution – well, you want real magic? Then get off your butt and exercise. Just move, just burn calories. I've been teaching this for years, don't go on diets, burn the fat, don't diet the fat. It's not only the real solution to losing fat it's a true miracle for your health. And what's really sad is that we have more and more personal trainers and so called fitness guru's these days telling people to exercise LESS today! Can you believe it? Stop and think about that for a minute. I mean, sure, there are people like executives, with great need for short, time efficient workouts, but the popularity of always looking for “the next big thing” in diets while at the same time down playing the importance of exercise is just unfathomable to me, whether we're talking about weight loss or blood pressure or any other health issue.

But you know it's all about selling whatever the popular program of the day is, whether that's a few minutes in the morning to 6 second abs or whatever. I do think everyone should know that all exercise is good exercise and even short bouts of 10 or 15 minutes of exercise have health benefits, and if you're a beginner, you can and should start slowly, but more exercise has even more benefits. Like you said, 30 minutes a day of walking is a great start, and if you add 30 or 45 minutes of weight training 3 days a week on top of that, your health and your body will just transform.

Ok, let's change gears for a minute and talk about drugs. Blood pressure medications can be a complex topic because there are a lot of them. Are drugs the standard medical treatment for high blood pressure? Can you give us blood pressure drugs 101, cliffs notes version?

**Frank Mangano:** I'll try to keep this as simple as possible for our listeners. Blood pressure medication causes one of three main reactions. They either increase the size of the blood vessel (vasodilator); flush out the blood vessel of salt and water and create freer blood flow with less volume (diuretic); or slow down the heart beat (beta blockers).

Here are the top 3 high blood pressure medications

1. Doxazosin (brand name Wytensin) is a vasodilator that relaxes blood vessel walls.
2. Hydrochlorothiazide (under brand names Carozine, HydroDiuril or

Diaqua) is a potassium reserving diuretic. It is intended to hang on to the potassium, an important mineral in lowering blood pressure that can get dangerously low with diuretic usage.

3. Acebutolo (brand name Sectral) is a beta blocker intended to decrease the heart rate and blood flow.

**Tom Venuto:** What are the down sides to using drugs to treat high blood pressure?

**Frank Mangano:** The downside to these drugs is the long list of side effects. Often the side effects are so bad that other medications have to be prescribed to counteract them. Some of the side effects include but are not limited to rapid heartbeat, impotence, fluid retention, gastrointestinal problems, dizziness, muscle weakness and especially cramping, lowering of the good cholesterol (HDL), dryness of the mouth, fever, anemia, a stuffy nose, diarrhea, heartburn, possible nightmares, swelling around the eyes and aches and pains in the joints.

Now Tom, keep in mind that all the prescription blood-pressure-reducing drugs don't have all these symptoms all the time. But if just seeing that list of potential side effects isn't enough for you to turn and run the other direction, what would be?

**Tom Venuto:** Yeah, there's a side effect or two in there that I would definitely like to avoid. Ok, so how would you approach implementing your natural strategies if you were already on drugs? And I would assume that

you would never advise someone to just stop taking their medication. How would you work with a physician on this and how open are most doctors to the idea of alternative natural approaches?

**Frank Mangano:** That's correct. I would never advise someone to stop taking his or her medication. That can be dangerous. Only a qualified healthcare professional can help their patient make that choice. If the doctor has approved an all-natural approach, then they will most likely be weaned off their prescriptions carefully and slowly, under the care of the physician while following the all-natural approach. This is the correct path to take.

Here's the thing, Tom. Most (not all) doctors will never tell you about all natural methods. Simply put...they can't tell you what they don't know. They can't recommend something that they don't know about. What do they know? They know that for almost every ailment, they can write a prescription for some drug that the greedy pharmaceutical companies are pushing. It's not their fault. It's how they're trained in med school. The truth is I very much enjoy the benefits of NOT being a doctor for this reason!

A lot also depends on the relationship you have with your doctor. You should be able to openly discuss any questions or concerns you have. This is important. If you're not comfortable with talking to your doctor, or your doctor doesn't want to hear of an all-natural approach, I highly suggest finding another doctor you can work with and who is willing to work with you.

You don't even have to go to the extreme of using a chiropractor or naturopath as your primary care, although these are two types of physicians who are focused on natural treatments. There are MDs out there and qualified nurse practitioners who are interested in the whole person and natural approaches to healthcare over getting patients in and out as quickly as possible.

Don't get the wrong idea. I'm not against doctors and I'm not saying that no one should be taking medication. It's just my belief that, in most cases, traditional medicine is NOT the answer and that doctors are often way too quick to pull out that prescription pad. It is also my belief that we are an over-medicated country!

**Tom Venuto:** I couldn't agree more and I appreciate you saying that. In your book, you were talking about adding certain natural supplements to a diet that's lacking in vitamins, minerals and other nutrients that are known to keep blood pressure at healthy levels, but then you said "dietary supplements are one way, but nothing is really better than a healthy eating plan that incorporates as many of the nutrients as possible in natural form." It's always a breath of fresh air to me when I hear someone say that, because it seems like someone always wants to sell you some miracle cure in a bottle.

In the fitness and weight loss field, I'm pretty well known for being a supplement skeptic. I don't believe in taking pills to lose weight, for example, because I believe that even if you're doing something like suppressing appetite successfully with a pill, and you eat less and lose weight as a result, you are still treating a symptom. If there haven't been

lifestyle changes and removal of causes, and there's been no nutrition education, the fat will come back.

On the other hand, I'm so not into drugs, that I have a very open mind for any natural or non-drug alternatives for addressing health problems. In the case of using certain nutrients, and that could mean in the form of supplements, or specific foods, would you tell what if any natural solutions have solid scientific support for use in addressing blood pressure?

**Frank Mangano:** My book, "[The Silent Killer Exposed](#)" details what natural supplements and vitamins you need to help maintain a healthy blood pressure, but I'll give you my top three or four to start with.

First of all, a good whole food supplement and multivitamin gives you a good base. Other than obesity, something that triggers high blood pressure is a lack of certain nutrients. Potassium is a good example. Those with high blood pressure often have potassium deficiencies. My recommendation for potassium is that you get it from food sources only and not a supplement unless directed by a doctor. That is because too much of a good thing can harm you. You should be able to get the recommended 3,500 mg daily of potassium from foods such as bananas and potatoes. Your whole food supplements and multivitamins also provide a small percentage of the recommended daily dose too, but more importantly, they give you a base for well-rounded nutrition.

If you could only choose one other supplement to add to your diet, I would recommend a good source of Omega 3 and Omega 6 fatty acids. This comes from the fish oil supplements or from fresh, wild harvested fish.

Fish oils that provide the essential fatty acids have more health benefits than you could talk about in a 10 hour program. It lowers blood pressure, controls cholesterol, makes the arteries more flexible and has even been studied as a way to manage mental health. When it comes to blood pressure, fish oil helps by keeping blood platelets from clotting together along the artery walls. This keeps the passages open and the blood flowing through freely so that there is less pressure on the arteries.

A fish oil supplement should supply at least 3,000 mg of the cold water fish oils. Ideally you would have about three servings a week of salmon, cod or halibut, but if that isn't happening week in and week out, you should be taking a supplement. One caution is that fish can have high levels of mercury or other metals. Wild harvested fish is less likely to contain the mercury. Supermarkets are required to label fish as wild harvested so you'll know it wasn't raised in a hatchery. Also, you need to check with the manufacturer of fish oil supplements about how much mercury theirs contains. It is not usually on the label, but information they keep on file.

Another addition to the diet should be lecithin. This is best when it is used in a granule form. You just stir about a tablespoon into your slow cooking oatmeal in the morning and you'll lower both your blood pressure and cholesterol. It also works cleaning up the sticky residues from the artery

walls. Lecithin contains choline, which scientific studies have proven prevents arteriosclerosis and improves brain function and memory.

Grape seed extract has been studied extensively to see how it impacts blood pressure. The second University of California-Davis study on humans was recently done and verified that grape seed extract can significantly lower blood pressure. In this case 24 participants lowered their systolic blood pressure by 12 millimeters and diastolic blood pressure by 8 millimeters in one month with just 150 mg daily supplements. That study also gave one group 300 milligrams per day of the grape seed extract to see if it lowered blood pressure more. The larger dose did not significantly lower blood pressure more, but it did have a positive impact on cholesterol.

**Tom Venuto:** Now, when you start talking about “alternative health” or “natural cures,” there is obviously some great interest in this subject today because many people want to avoid taking prescription drugs at all costs. There may be some real and legitimate alternative or natural solutions to drugs for helping to control blood pressure. The problem is, the word “quack” often comes up in the same breath as the word “alternative medicine” and the supplement industry is not tightly regulated and the FTC simply can’t keep up with all the claims being made on so many products. Maybe there are some real legitimate natural alternatives to drugs, but if they’re mixed in with all these bogus products, what’s a consumer supposed to do?

**Frank Mangano:** I know what you mean, Tom. It can be very overwhelming and confusing. You need to thoroughly do your homework

and look at the list of ingredients carefully. Learn as much as you possibly can about the product. Try to find evidence that the product is as effective as the manufacturer claims. The key to choosing the right product comes from researching the product and the company that makes the product to find out which products have been tested and what studies have been conducted.

Also, steer clear of supplements that contain artificial binders, fillers, sweeteners and preservatives. Another tip is to purchase supplements in capsule form rather than tablets. Capsules are a better choice because they don't include as much filler as tablets do and the nutrients can be more efficiently absorbed into the body.

**Tom Venuto:** Okay, well, just to prove the point of how confusing the marketplace is, I did a Google search on high blood pressure remedies before this call and just like for obesity or any other health problem, you are bombarded with advertisements and all kind of claims. It's pretty unreal what you come up with online after a few searches. I'm not an expert on blood pressure or blood pressure treatments so personally I found the claims and mass amount of information to be pretty overwhelming and even I wasn't sure what to believe at first without doing some serious homework.

So I'm going to tap into your expertise some more and rattle off really quickly a whole list of blood pressure remedies that I found online and the claims that came with them and I'd like you to very quickly give your opinion along with your thumbs up - it helps, or thumbs down – its hype, ok?

**Frank Mangano:** Okay, fire away Tom.

**Tom Venuto:** Okay first one, pure essential oils. Lavender, rose, ylang ylang. Rub it on your wrist and in conjunction with your blood pressure medication your blood pressure will drop. Pretty cheap, only \$14.95 and it says this will last for 6 months.

**Frank Mangano:** This might have some impact on blood pressure, but not completely from a nutritional standpoint. For example, lavender is an essential oil with a calming aroma. This can be used as a stress reliever, which we know lowers blood pressure. The rose is a good source of vitamin C, but has to be ingested. There are much better ways to get and assimilate vitamin C. The ylang ylang works like the lavender as an aromatherapy.

**Tom Venuto:** Alright, next one and you can't miss this one online. Hyprava. The ad says it will lower your blood pressure 20, 30 or 50 points without drugs or harmful side effects. This is a bunch of herbs like hawthorn, garlic, ginger, ginkgo, valerian and bunch of other stuff, and it's \$67 a bottle.

**Frank Mangano:** All of the herbs you mentioned might help to lower blood pressure. What would be important about this supplement is to check the reputation of the manufacturer and the purity of the ingredients. You can make \$67 worth of garlic and ginger go a long way in your cooking and add flavor and nutrition to your diet that way. The valerian root helps with stress reduction and the ginkgo improves circulation so all of these ingredients are good, if they are well formulated in the supplement.

**Tom Venuto:** Angioprim. I really couldn't find an ingredients list of what this is, just gives a lot of warnings of what will happen to you if you don't take it and that its an alternative to unplug blocked arteries.... \$299 for six month supply.

**Frank Mangano:** Angioprim contains three key ingredients: Caysine, which is a synthetic blend of amino acids; Lysine, an essential amino acid and Cystine, a non-essential amino acid. Amino acids are important to cardiovascular health. Lysine in particular cannot be manufactured by the body and must come from food sources such as potatoes, soy products, fish, and eggs. Cysteine is an unstable amino acid that converts to L-Cysteine and vice versa and both work as antioxidants as the body needs them for detoxification purposes. This supplement is promoted as an alternative to angioplasty surgery, which opens small arteries and eases the symptoms of angina. I would not make this decision on my own if I had been told I had a blocked coronary artery. If your doctor agrees that it is safe to wait and try this blend of amino acids, then I'd consider it. You just might be able to non-surgically relieve symptoms with this and other antioxidants.

**Tom Venuto:** Okay, this one sounds exotic. Muktaki. Ayurvedic herbal remedy for hypertension, anxiety and insomnia. Fast results in 3 to 4 days. It's a whole bunch of Indian herbs. 1 month pack, \$19.95 British pounds

**Frank Mangano:** There are a lot of lesser known and exotic herbs in the Ayurvedic remedy. If anyone is going to take such a supplement, it is important to know what each herb does and how it interacts with other herbs. You have to remember, that most modern pharmaceuticals are based

on herbs, so herbs can cause powerful reactions in the body, just like a drug. I will tell you that there are less exotic, equally effective ways to get antioxidants and lower blood pressure.

**Tom Venuto:** This next one is said to be nature's answer to lowering high blood pressure. Hawthorne, coleus forskolli – I've seen coleus in some diet pills too - olive leaf extract, odorless garlic, and B vitamins. A year's supply about a hundred bucks.

**Frank Mangano:** Hawthorne is an excellent herb for lowering blood pressure because it directly works on the blood vessels. It causes them to dilate much like the Doxazosin, but without the side effects. Hawthorne also helps restore the heart muscle that has been overworked if blood pressure has remained high for long periods of time. Hawthorne contains many B vitamins and Vitamin C. Garlic also lowers blood pressure by improving circulation by its blood thinning action. Olive leaf extract is lesser known, but does improve blood pressure. Just look at the Mediterranean diet. Most people there eat plenty of garlic and olive oil and have relatively few problems with blood pressure. Again, much of the benefits of this supplement can be obtained through diet, or a single herb supplement.

**Tom Venuto:** I'm glad you keep mentioning that a lot of this stuff can be obtained from the food you eat – garlic, ginger, olive oil and so on. Ok, next one is Hyperexol. It says drops your blood pressure 30 points in 30 days or it's FREE. That's pretty specific and convincing with the guarantee. It says it's a doctor-approved formula, all natural ingredients. The ingredients list is

magnesium oxide, calcium carbonate, potassium, alum sativa, hawthorne berry, vitamin C, cayenne pepper, taurine. Buy 2 bottles get 1 free \$114.

**Frank Mangano:** It's correct in its claims that this supplement contains ingredients proven to lower blood pressure. The next thing I look at when choosing a supplement, then, is the reputation of the manufacturer. Since herbs are not approved or regulated by the FDA, the industry must regulate itself. In the case of Hyperexol, this formula was devised by a naturopath who is board certified by their governing agencies. The website for the product also gives consumers easy to find and clear contact names and numbers – another good sign that this is a reputable company. While I'm not endorsing a particular brand of supplements, I can recommend that consumers contact the manufacturer of whatever supplement they are considering and ask them for their research information. You can ask such questions of the manufacturer such as, "Where do you obtain your herbs? How are they processed? What studies have you conducted?" A good manufacturer will have this information readily available to send to you.

**Tom Venuto:** Okay last one, more herbal stuff, I've seen that all over the Internet – herbs for blood pressure. This one is advertised as a natural remedy. Comes in capsules or liquid \$36.95 a bottle. Most of the stuff in here I've never even heard of, then again I'm no herbalist, but I've heard of a few of these ingredients. Taraxum I've heard of – that's dandelion - it's often put into weight loss pills or herbal water pills or natural diuretics. There's also olea europea, agathosma betulina, that's butchu - also an herbal diuretic I've heard of that one too, actually this whole formula looks to me like an herbal diuretic.

I do know for a fact that some of these natural herbal diuretics can temporarily remove water retention and I know about this from bodybuilders who use natural diuretics because they go into drug tested contests and prescription diuretics are banned or they just don't want to mess with them. In fact, famous pro bodybuilders have died from taking lasix. But what about in the context of blood pressure, would an herbal diuretic be of any benefit?

**Frank Mangano:** Herbal diuretics are beneficial in controlling blood pressure. What I would caution a person about is that diuretic use can cause severe potassium deficiencies. In fact, some of the prescription diuretics used to lower blood pressure are “potassium preserving” so that this doesn't happen. A mild diuretic is okay, but I'd rely more on drinking plenty of water.

**Tom Venuto:** Let me fire a few quick questions at you point blank about all these advertised remedies. One, how do you know this stuff works? Do you take an advertisers word for it? Two, how do you know which one to choose – there's so many – and these were just a few websites I found inside 10 or 15 minutes. Three, should people be self prescribing and self medicating after doing a little Internet research like I just did – is it safe? Is it even necessary or could healthy nutrition and exercise and losing excess fat be enough?

**Frank Mangano:** Those are all good questions, Tom. A little information can be dangerous, especially when it comes to health problems. There is little monitoring going on about what claims are true or false when it comes

to herbal supplements too. Unfortunately the FDA doesn't get involved until people start getting seriously injured and complaints are filed, such as with ephedra usage.

Under the FDA's Dietary Health and Supplement Education Act of 1994, the manufacturer is responsible for ensuring their products are safe before it goes to market. It doesn't mention the effectiveness of the claims, but states the manufacturer must make sure the product label is truthful and not misleading. It leaves a lot of wiggle room for manufacturers that are not completely reputable to make unsubstantiated claims. Again, I'll caution everyone who is listening that you need to get background information on a manufacturer before taking that supplement. The FDA does publish on their website tips for making informed choices about supplements. It's found at [FDA.org](http://FDA.org), and called, "*Tips For The Savvy Supplement User: Making Informed Decisions And Evaluating Information.*"

The basic vitamins, minerals and herbs that you need to maintain healthy blood pressure can be supplied – for the most part – by the foods you eat. It's all about setting up a nutritional plan specific to supporting good blood pressure. If you do that, little, if any, supplementing will be need.

**Tom Venuto:** On the subject of supplements and natural or non-drug remedies, is there any that the medical establishment and scientific community give almost unanimous support for in the treatment of hypertension?

**Frank Mangano:** The medical community has really come to embrace fish oil supplements. They recognized through extensive research the benefits of the essential fatty acids and that the lack of these nutrients in the American diet especially is responsible for numerous health problems. There are a lot of other herbs that have been studied and the results of these clinical trials are often published by the National Institutes of Health and other federal health agencies or in prominent medical journals.

**Tom Venuto:** In your own personal opinion, are there any supplements that might fall under the “Alternative health” umbrella that the medical establishment and scientific community is hesitant to support or where they say maybe, but “more research is needed” but which you think have potential?

**Frank Mangano:** There are a lot of supplements that the medical community just doesn't want to embrace. But they haven't vetoed them yet either. The problem with mainstream healthcare is that they are looking for ways to bottle and market a remedy and in doing so lose touch with what is already available to consumers. I know that they do this to ensure safety and purity of the remedies, but it is often at the expense of getting important information to the consumer. One example of this is with Vitamin C. This vitamin is known to boost the immune system, yet the medical establishment won't necessarily recommend it for that purpose because more proof is needed – and that proof takes time and money.

One that has huge potential in lowering blood pressure but doesn't have the full support of the medical community yet is L-Arginine. Herbalists

consider arginine essential to controlling high blood pressure, yet the medical community believes that most people produce what they need and doesn't support taking a supplement. If someone has a fatty liver and slow healing wounds or hair loss, then they may need to get more of this amino acid in their system.

The problem is not so much that the medical community believes these nutrients won't help, it's just they are not prepared to stick their necks out and take a definitive stand on most natural remedies.

**Tom Venuto:** And why is it that these potential solutions are not better known? What is it, some kind of conspiracy? I see this guy on TV all the time talking about natural cures “they” don't want you to know about. Who is “they?” Is it really possible that the pharmaceutical industry has so much economic power and influence that they can suppress a natural remedy because that would cut into their drug profits, or is that too outrageous to be true?

**Frank Mangano:** I don't believe any legitimate physician or scientist would want to hide the fact that there is a natural way to get healthy if they believed it would work. They often just don't have the facts themselves, so they can't pass this information along. I believe the drug manufacturers do have profits on their minds, but disguise this with scare tactics about how there has not been sufficient testing about how safe or effective natural remedies are – which just isn't true. If more consumers demanded natural remedies, more would be done to test and educate. It's happening already. There is a lot more activity in this area than just 5 or 10 years ago. That is

making scientists and doctors more interested in finding out for themselves. The same thing happened with organic foods. Once people understood the benefits, there was a higher demand for them, and they started to be more readily available and affordable.

**Tom Venuto:** We're almost out of time, but before we wrap this up, I want to ask you a question on a completely different note that is related to a personal interest of mine. I'm a natural bodybuilder as you know, obviously I do a lot of weight training, and a lot of people really believe that lifting weights raises blood pressure. My understanding of this is that lifting can cause a temporary rise in blood pressure during the exercise, especially on exercises where you do the Valsalva maneuver, which just means that you temporarily hold your breath through the sticking point of an exercise which will increase intra abdominal pressure and help you get through the difficult part of the lift. For example, you inhale on the way down on a leg press exercise, then at the bottom you reverse direction, hold your breath for a split second and then push through the sticking point and breathe out.

What I have read in the strength and conditioning literature is that this is only a transient rise in blood pressure and that if anything, a weight training program does not increase blood pressure long term, there is either no change in resting blood pressure or a decrease, depending on the person and the nature of the weight training program in question.

Here are my questions for you. Has your research found the same thing I did? Second, what about people who are not healthy and who have been diagnosed with high blood pressure. Should they be doing weight training?

If so, how should they modify their workouts - I mean should they be doing heavy leg presses, squats and dead lifts and so on? Or what about higher reps and lighter weights? And last but not least, have you found any new research that's just come out recently on whether weight training could either raise or lower resting blood pressure long term?

**Frank Mangano:** My research shows basically the same as what you found. Yes, there is a short-term raise in blood pressure during weight lifting, especially for those maneuvers where the breath is held. For a person who is in good cardiovascular health this isn't a problem. For those who already have high blood pressure, weight training may even lower it, but the valsalva maneuver should be avoided until their every day blood pressure is consistently good.

Weight training, as you know, creates lean muscle mass, which increases metabolism and helps in weight reduction. Losing weight lowers blood pressure. To use weight training as a means of losing weight and lowering blood pressure I recommend the lower weight – higher reps workout. The circuit training approach is a great way for pre-hypertensive individuals to get control of their blood pressure before it becomes a dangerous health problem.

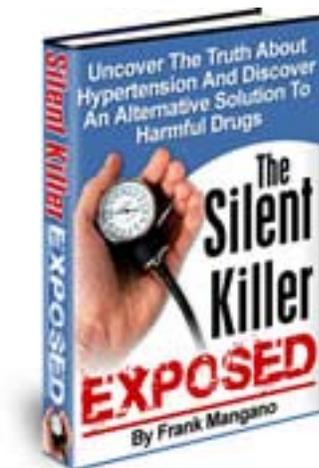
**Tom Venuto:** Well Frank, we're just about out of time, so I want to say thank you, this has been a great interview and some great information. I appreciate you sharing your time and expertise with my listeners. Even as a fitness professional myself, I'm learning new things here in the health field and expanding my perspectives and my definition of exactly what natural

health, natural fitness and natural bodybuilding mean, because once again it means a lot more than just muscle, low body fat and looking good on the outside. Before we go, why don't you give us your website address so if anyone listening wants to check out your e-book, [\*"The Silent Killer Exposed"\*](#), they can just go online and read more about it.

**Frank Mangano:** You're very welcome, Tom. It's been my pleasure. You can find out everything you need to know about my book by visiting:

[www.TheSilentKillerExposed.com](http://www.TheSilentKillerExposed.com)

**Tom Venuto:** Awesome, thanks again Frank.



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Tom Venuto is an NSCA-certified strength and conditioning specialist, lifetime natural bodybuilder, freelance writer, success coach and author of the #1 best-selling e-book, [\*\*"Burn The fat, Feed The Muscle"\*\*](#) (BFFM): Fat Burning Secrets of the World's Best Bodybuilders and Fitness Models.

Tom has written hundreds of articles and has been featured in IRONMAN magazine, Natural Bodybuilding, Muscular Development, Muscle-Zine, Olympian's News (in Italian), Exercise for Men and Men's Exercise.



Frank Mangano is a natural health expert and best selling author who teaches you how to dramatically improve your health naturally, without expensive and potentially dangerous prescription drugs.

As an active member of his community he works diligently providing assistance to senior citizens and probing as a health advocate to discover new and innovative ways to promote well being. The hard work and persistence that Frank has invested in recent years is reflected through his writings. He is the proud author of:

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