

Benefits for body and mind

“Yin and yang” are the well-known universal principles in the traditional Chinese view of the world. “Yang”: light and white, “yin”: darkness and black. The “SNS” is part of the “yang side”, the “PNS” part of the “yin side”.

“Yin” and “yang” affect the whole human being, “body and mind”. “Yang” symbolizes activity, tension, achievement, also assertiveness and aggressiveness; “yin” symbolizes passiveness, calm and relaxation, regeneration, and also economy, feelings, bonding and love.

Body **and** mind are involved in the development of a heart attack. As far as the body is concerned, the analysis of heart activity shows a defective PNS. **On a mental level, psychosomatic research has produced hard facts that show that suppressing feelings and depression, social isolation and constant negative stress, accompanied by an exaggerated desire for recognition, all play an important role in the development of heart attacks (64).** There is no clearly defined “heart attack personality” due to the variety of causes of heart attacks. Nevertheless, emotional armour is strikingly frequent in heart patients. This inhibits the ability of the PNS to “swing”. “Body and mind” are blocked on the “yin side” as shown in this illustration of “yin weakness” as a focus of heart attack.



The focus of a heart attack

What can be done to reduce this weakness, or even make it disappear? The only way, to remain with this symbol, is to fill the defect with vital “yin”, with calm and relaxation, and with feelings and love. This strengthens the PNS and protects the heart.

There is much you yourself can do

You can do the most to avoid a heart attack. Heart patients and those wishing to avoid a heart attack are best helped by taking simple, everyday measures. In my book “Herzinfarkt – Neue Wege” (45), I have explained 10 such measures in detail.

What really helps? The appeal to **stop smoking** and to be more active, particularly doing **endurance sports**, is nothing new. Too little attention is paid to getting **a lot of sleep**. Deep sleep in the hours before and shortly after midnight has the best regenerative effect on a weakened PNS

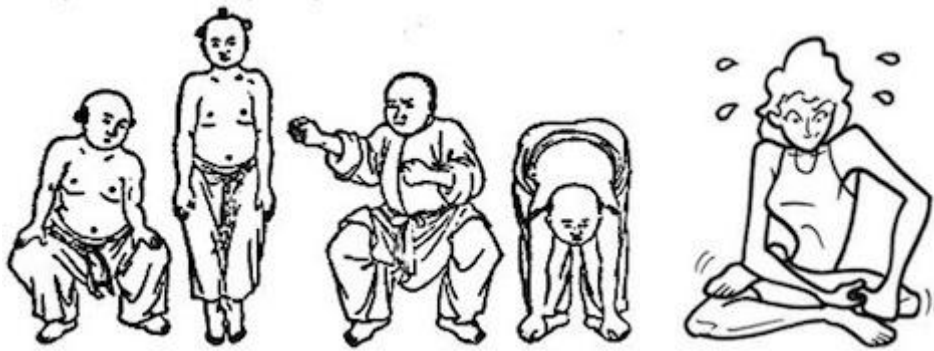
Emotional care has saved the lives of many heart patients. This is scientifically founded. A very interesting study as an example (65): male heart attack patients were visited by nurses on request, during the first critical year following a heart attack, during periods of stress and agitation. The nurses were medically, but were on purpose not psychologically trained. They answered their patient's questions as well as they could and tried to calm them. **This simple contact, and especially the fact that someone was caring for them, saved a large number of lives during this year.** If only 22 heart attack patients were cared for in this way for one year, then one death would be prevented. There can be no better success for a preventive measure than this! So please, search for emotional warmth; do not isolate yourself, and try to open your heart. This not only helps the whole human being, but it also reduces the risk of heart attack and helps one survive.

Heart patients and psychology; this is unfortunately a hopeless undertaking. Heart patients always have everything under control: **Fear?**, not really, **Conflicts?**, are there to be solved and they will be solved, **hurt and angry?**, not that I know of. Heart attack patients are often cut off from their deeper emotions. Nobody is less suitable than a psychologist when trying to soften this emotional blockage. If one approaches a heart patient with psychology, he feels threatened and closes up completely. He doesn't want anything to do with psychologists.

Nevertheless, it would be good for the patient, even indispensable for survival, for him to open up his inner life, as it is exactly what remains bottled up that causes damage and leads to dangerous dips in PNS (see Section 2 on "Stress and Heart Attacks"). During my consultations with heart patients, it often strikes me how, after a heart attack, they give much care and love to their close relationships with partners, wives and with their families. This is the best thing for them, whether one believes in the "**healing power of love**" or not. You may not believe it, but it has been scientifically proved that physical touch and love helps the PNS to grow and strengthen (66,67). The connection between emotional life and the PNS are explained in detail in my book "Herzinfarkt vermeiden" (11).

The focus can heal

What else can you do? Calm down – relax: try out the traditional Asian arts! This can help enormously. Yoga is good; learn to meditate, to "enter into stillness" as an older female patient once described the art of meditation.



Chinese “Chi Kung”, the flowing movements of “Tai Chi” offer excellent possibilities. Acupuncture helps against heart complaints and stabilizes inner balance. Patients who are financially well-situated should spoil themselves with ayurvedic massages. This all helps to fill the “yin defect” with “vital yin”, and strengthens the PNS enormously and has a healing effect. The peace of mind achieved with the aid of these arts, the inner freedom they offer can enrich your future life and be a solid protection against heart attacks.

Diet plays a central role in the prevention of heart attacks. Whereby, in principle, the main thing is to reduce oxidative stress. **Your first step should be to forget the dogma on “low cholesterol”**, because cholesterol is a substance that is absolutely indispensable for life; having too little has been proved to be dangerous. A diet low in cholesterol and rich in polyunsaturated fatty acids increases the risk of oxidative stress (see Section 6).



Nowadays, the official magic formula is “**Mediterranean**”: olive oil, bread, a lot of fruit and vegetables, no day passes without fresh fruit, more fish than meat, preferably white meat in the form of poultry, and a glass of wine as is common in Mediterranean countries. **Asian cuisine** is also healthy for the heart. **The best thing for the heart is: fresh fruit on a daily basis, fresh vegetables, not from the other side of the world, but regional, seasonal produce, wholemeal products, a lot of fish and nuts, not forgetting the wine. And don’t be afraid of having an egg for breakfast.**



One should pay attention to three aspects: **variety and diversity, freshness and gentle preparation** of food. Industrially produced food fulfils these standards only to a very limited extent. **What our grandparents put on the table tends to offer the best protection against oxidation.**

You are almost there! In principle, you do not need a doctor's help for this. But please, do find a general practitioner! A trusting relationship with your doctor is of inestimable value to a heart patient. Today, most heart patients have "their cardiologist". There are very pleasant cardiologists. If you are advised to undergo a procedure such as insertion of a stent or bypass surgery, please get your doctor to explain why this is necessary. When you have read this homepage, you will be informed enough to make your own decisions.

Medication? By all means!

"Nitro" capsules or "nitro" spray aid in treating acute heart seizures. As is generally known, "nitroglycerin" is the basis of dynamite. By taking "nitroglycerin", "nitrogen monoxide" ("NO") is released in the human heart. "NO" helps the heart muscle immediately and prevents dangerous acidification (see Section 6).

Beta blockers improve chances of survival during the very risky period following a heart attack. This is due mainly to their protective effects with regard to life-threatening heart rhythm problems. Beta-blockers protect against stress as they "block", or to be more exact, they weaken the influence of the SNS on the heart. At the same time, after a short while, this "beta blockade" leads to an increase in influence of the PNS on the heart, which explains the calming and protective effect of these substances. They are, however, not free from side-effects; particularly a tendency to depression and lack of potency limit their use.

"Statins" (cholesterol inhibitors) and **aspirin** have each been discussed in separate chapters. Is this all there is? Is there no "alternative wonder substance" for heart patients?