

**EMBARGOED UNTIL TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14 AT 5:00 EST**

**Contact:** Ellen Beth Levitt (eblevitt@umabnet.ab.umd.edu.)  
(During the AHA conference: Pan Pacific Hotel 714-999-0990)  
or Jill B. Bloom (76245.2623@compuserve.com.)  
410-328-8919

**WHY DO BIG MACS AND HAAGEN DAZ INCREASE HEART ATTACK RISK?**

A new study from researchers at the University of Maryland Medical Center and the University of Minnesota may shed new light on why a high fat diet contributes to hardening of the arteries. While the connection has been well known, scientists have been trying to gain more information to explain the process.

"Our study indicates that after at least several weeks on a high fat diet, the body's ability to clear the fat becomes impaired," says Michael Miller, M.D., director of Preventive Cardiology at the University of Maryland Medical Center. "The body's mechanisms that normally break down the fat are so overburdened that they cannot perform properly."

Fat that is not broken down remains in the bloodstream and is eventually picked up by cells, called "scavenger" cells, that transport the fat to blood vessels throughout the body, including the coronary arteries. Over time, these fatty deposits can increase in size, and lead to a heart attack. The new study was presented today at the 68th American Heart Association Scientific Sessions in Anaheim, California.

(MORE)

University of Maryland  
Dr. Miller and  
American Heart Association