

“The principle of science, the definition, almost, is the following: The test of all knowledge is experiment. Experiment is the sole judge of scientific 'truth'.” — Richard Feynman, 1965 Nobel laureate in physics

Chapter 2

Willis

George C. Willis, M.D., was a medical doctor and the leading physician in a Canadian group that published a series of papers about vitamin C and heart disease in the peer-reviewed *Canadian Medical Association Journal* during the 1950s. These landmark papers are of a series of experiments that “prove” that a single variable — low intake of vitamin C — causes the condition commonly called atherosclerosis which narrows arteries, restricts blood flow, and causes angina pain.

Ascorbic acid is the technical name for vitamin C, and the two terms are used interchangeably in this chapter and throughout this book. A *scorbutic* diet is a diet that is low in vitamin C and will cause *scurvy*, the classic vitamin C deficiency disease. *Lesions* are injuries or abnormalities in the walls of arteries that are thought to precipitate the disease process.

The pioneering research into the relationship between vitamin C and heart disease was begun in the 1940s not long after the molecular structure of vitamin C was determined, circa 1937. Before World War II the Canadian J. C. Paterson had published papers in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* with his findings that capillaries tend to rupture and