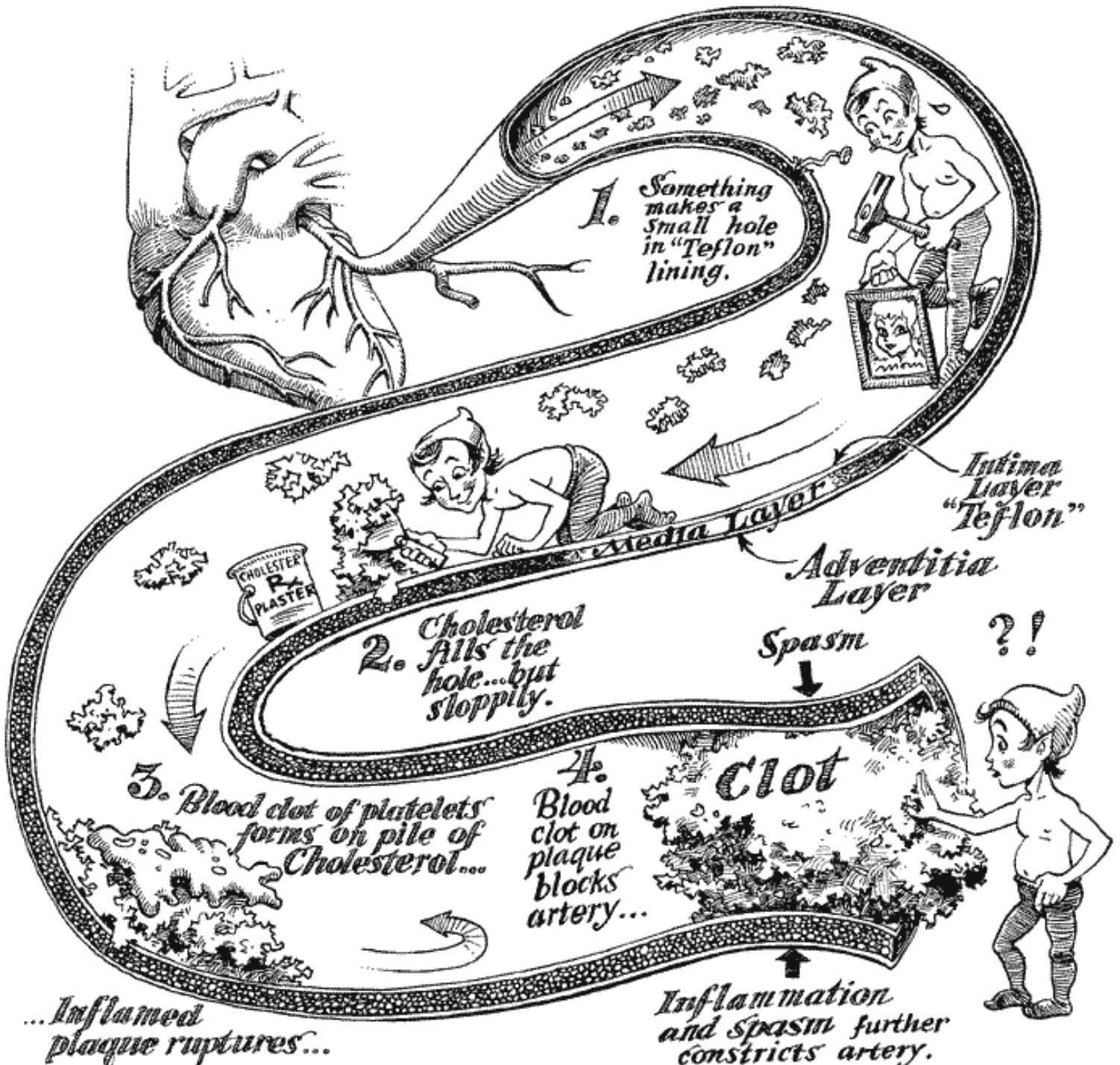


# Aging Arteries

High blood pressure, high blood sugar, the effects of cigarettes, and other factors can nick the smooth inner layer of your arteries. Your body tries to repair that nick using cholesterol as a plaster. But if the proteins carrying the cholesterol are bad (LDL), an inflammatory reaction is triggered that signals for white cells to invade the area. The resulting plaque is irritated and encourages a blood clot to form. That clot can suddenly block the entire artery—and lead to heart attack, stroke, impotence, and memory loss.



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