

The Facts about Cholesterol

What is Cholesterol?

- Cholesterol is a fat like substance in the bloodstream. Everyone has cholesterol and it is important in body functions.
- Your body needs cholesterol to develop cell membranes and to make hormones.
- Too much cholesterol may lead to heart disease, heart attack, or stroke.
- Eating a well balanced healthy diet and getting plenty of physical activity are both important to maintaining a healthy cholesterol level.
- Including good sources of dietary fiber can help the body eliminate cholesterol from the bloodstream.

“Bad” vs. “Good” Cholesterol

“Bad” cholesterol is known as LDL cholesterol. This form of cholesterol is associated with increased risk of heart attack and stroke. The higher your LDL, the higher your risk. LDL cholesterol is made naturally in your body but can be elevated by eating foods containing trans fat and saturated fat. Too much LDL circulating in the blood can build up in the walls of the arteries causing them to narrow and become less flexible.

“Good” cholesterol, or HDL, is also produced within your body. High levels of HDL are associated with a lower risk of heart attack and stroke. Eating foods like olive oil, nuts and avocados plus increasing physical activity can help raise your HDL levels. HDL carries LDL cholesterol away from arteries back to the liver where it is disposed of, lowering the amount of total cholesterol circulating in the blood.

The Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes (TLC) Diet

To help lower cholesterol

This is the diet recommended by the National Institutes of Health to help lower cholesterol. A Registered Dietitian can help you plan how to meet these guidelines.

- 25-35% or less of total daily calories from fat.
- 7% or less of total fat from saturated fat.
- Less than 200 mg cholesterol a day.

Understanding the Numbers

Total Cholesterol:

200mg/dl or less: Optimal
240mg/dl or more: High

LDL:

Less than 100mg/dl: Optimal
130mg/dl or more: High

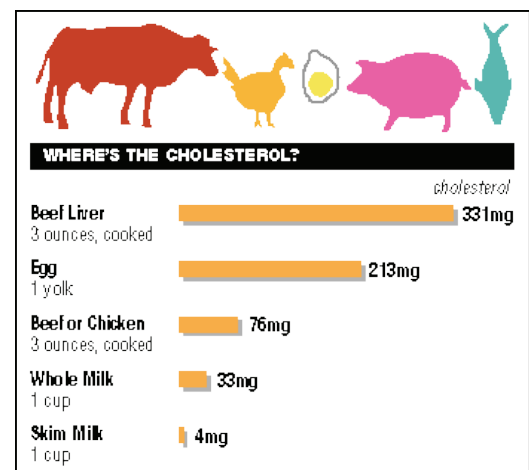
HDL:

60mg/dl or more: Optimal
35mg/dl or less: Poor

Where does cholesterol come from?

Your body makes about 75% of the cholesterol in your blood; the other 25% comes from foods you eat.

- Cholesterol is produced in your body by the liver.
- Cholesterol is also found in foods that contain animal fats like eggs, meat, dairy products and fish.





Heart Healthy Shopping List



Grains

- Breads: 100% whole wheat or whole grain
- Whole grain crackers
- Whole wheat or corn tortillas
- Cereals: whole grain and low in sugar and fats
- Brown rice
- Whole wheat pasta
- Rice cakes
- Other grains: bulgur, couscous, quinoa, barley

Dairy

- Fat free or 1% milk
- Reduced fat cheese (3 grams or less of fat per serving)
- Low fat or nonfat yogurt
- Low fat cottage cheese

Meat Alternatives

- Tofu or tempeh
- Gardenburger™
- Lentils and beans
- Boca Products™
- Morning Star Farms Products™



Egg / Egg Substitutes

- Whole eggs: no more than 2 per week
- Egg whites
- Egg Beaters™ (or store brand)

Meats

- Chicken: white meat, skin removed
- Turkey: white meat, skin removed
- Fish
- Beef: eye of round, top round, sirloin
- Extra lean ground beef
- Pork: tenderloin, sirloin, top loin
- 99% fat-free lunch meats (watch sodium levels)

Making Healthy Dietary Choices

- Chose lean cuts of meat and poultry; trim all visible fat and skin.
- Include high fiber foods like fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- Drink skim milk rather than whole or 2% milk.
- Eat more fish! Bake it, broil it, or grill it.
- Avoid foods with trans fats and hydrogenated vegetable oil as much as possible.
- Choose low sodium foods, and use little salt when preparing food.

As part of a heart healthy lifestyle, include 60 minutes of physical activity most days.

(Check with your doctor before engaging in physical activity.)