

BETTER HEALTH 4 YOU

SMART LOCAL 36 BENEFIT FUND

BLOOD PRESSURE, CHOLESTEROL, HEART DISEASE

About Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a waxy substance that comes from two sources: your body and food. Your body, and especially your liver, makes all the cholesterol you need and circulates it through the blood. But cholesterol is also found in foods from animal sources, such as meat, poultry and full-fat dairy products. Your liver produces more cholesterol when you eat a diet high in saturated and trans fats.

Excess cholesterol can form plaque

between layers of artery walls, making it harder for your heart to circulate blood. Plaque can break open and cause blood clots. If a clot blocks an artery that feeds the brain, it causes a stroke. If it blocks an artery that feeds the heart, it causes a heart attack.

There are two types of cholesterol: "good" and "bad." Too much of one type — or not enough of another — can put you at risk for coronary heart disease, heart attack or stroke. It's important to know the levels of cholesterol in your blood so that you and your doctor can determine the best strategy to lower your risk.

Making healthy eating choices and increasing exercise are important

It may surprise you to know that cholesterol itself isn't bad. In fact, cholesterol is just one of the many substances created and used by our bodies to keep us healthy.

first steps in improving your cholesterol. For some people, cholesterol-lowering medication may also be needed to reduce the risk for heart attack and stroke. Use the information provided here to start a conversation with your doctor about how cholesterol affects your heart attack and stroke risk and what you can do to lower your risk.

Good vs. Bad Cholesterol

Cholesterol can't dissolve in the blood. It must be

transported through your bloodstream by carriers called lipoproteins, which got their name because they're made of fat (lipid) and proteins.

The two types of lipoproteins that carry cholesterol to and from cells are low-density lipoprotein, or LDL, and high-density lipoprotein, or HDL. LDL cholesterol and HDL cholesterol, along with one fifth of your triglyceride level, make up your total cholesterol count, which can be determined through a blood test.

LOW CHOLESTEROL RECIPE

PENNE WITH CHICKEN AND ASPARAGUS

16 OUNCES DRIED PENNE PASTA

5 TBS OLIVE OIL (DIVIDED)

2 SKINLESS, BONELESS CHICKEN CUT IN CUBES

SALT & PEPPER TO TASTE

GARLIC POWDER TO TASTE

½ CUP LOW SODIUM CHICKEN BROTH

1 BUNCH OF ASPARAGUS CUT IN 1" PIECES

1 CLOVE GARLIC SLICED

¼ CUP PARMESAN CHEESE

COOK PASTA ACCORDING TO PKG. HEAT 3 TBS OLIVE OIL, STIR IN CHICKEN AND SEASON WITH S&P. COOK THROUGH (ABOUT 5 MIN) SET ASIDE. POUR BROTH IN SAME SKILLET, STIR IN ASPARAGUS, GARLIC, GARLIC POWDER, AND S&P. COVER AND STEAM ABOUT 5-10 MINUTES UNTIL ASPARAGUS IS TENDER. RETURN CHICKEN TO SKILLET AND WARM THROUGH. COMBINE PASTA AND CHICKEN MIXTURE. DRIZZLE 2 TBS. OLIVE OIL, STIR AND SPRINKLE WITH PARMESAN CHEESE.





LDL (Bad) Cholesterol

LDL cholesterol is considered the “bad” cholesterol because it contributes to plaque, a thick, hard deposit that can clog arteries and make them less flexible. This condition is known as atherosclerosis. If a clot forms and blocks a narrowed artery, heart attack or stroke can result. Another condition called peripheral artery disease can develop when plaque buildup narrows an artery supplying blood to the legs.

HDL (Good) Cholesterol

HDL cholesterol is considered “good” cholesterol because it helps remove LDL cholesterol from the arteries. Experts believe HDL acts as a scavenger, carrying LDL cholesterol away from the arteries and back to the liver, where it is broken down and passed from the body. One-fourth to one-third of blood cholesterol is carried by HDL. A healthy level of HDL cholesterol may also protect against heart attack and stroke, while low levels of HDL cholesterol have been shown to increase the risk of heart disease.

Triglycerides

Triglycerides are another type of fat, and they’re used to store excess energy from your diet. High levels of triglycerides in the blood are associated with atherosclerosis. Elevated triglycerides can be caused by

overweight and obesity, physical inactivity, cigarette smoking, excess alcohol consumption and a diet very high in carbohydrates (more than 60 percent of total calories). Underlying diseases or genetic disorders are sometimes the cause of high triglycerides. People with high triglycerides often have a high total cholesterol level, including a high LDL cholesterol (bad) level and a low HDL cholesterol (good) level. Many people with heart disease or diabetes also have high triglyceride levels.

Saturated fats

Saturated fats are found in animal products such as butter, cheese, whole milk, ice cream, cream, and fatty meats, and oils such as coconut, palm, and palm kernel oil



Prevention and Treatment of High Cholesterol

Too much cholesterol in the blood can lead to cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 cause of death in the United States. Over 2,100 Americans die of cardiovascular disease each day, an average of one death every 40 seconds.

The good news is, you can lower your cholesterol and reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke.

Working with your doctor is key. It takes a team to develop and maintain a successful health program. You and your healthcare

professionals each play an important role in maintaining and improving your heart health.

Work with your doctor to determine your risk and the best approach to manage it. In all cases, lifestyle changes are important to reduce your risk for heart attack and stroke. In some cases, cholesterol-lowering statin medicines may also provide benefit.

Learn how to make diet and lifestyle changes easy and lasting. Also make sure you understand instructions for taking medication because it won't work if you don't take it as directed.

- **Lifestyle Changes**
Your diet, weight, physical activity and exposure to tobacco smoke all affect your cholesterol level.
- **Know Your Fats**
Knowing which fats raise LDL cholesterol and which ones don't is the first step in lowering your risk of heart disease.
- **Cooking for Lower Cholesterol**
A heart-healthy eating plan can help you manage your blood cholesterol level.
- **Understand Drug Therapy Options**
For some people, lifestyle changes alone aren't enough to reach healthy cholesterol levels. Your doctor may prescribe medication.



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Call me anytime with questions