

My Cholesterol Numbers

Total Blood Cholesterol	LDL	HDL	Triglycerides	Date

Understanding My Numbers

All numbers are mg/dL — milligrams per deciliter of blood.

Total Blood Cholesterol	LDL	HDL	Triglycerides	What It Means
240 and up high	190 and up very high 160 - 189 high	below 40 for men below 50 for women	500 and up very high 200 - 499 high risk	Bad high risk for heart disease
200 - 239 bordering on high	130 - 159 bordering on high	does not apply	150 - 199 bordering on high	Better less risk for heart disease
below 200	129 or lower is good (below 100 is optimal*)	above 60 is ideal	below 150 (under 100 is optimal)	Best least risk for heart disease

*Your own optimal LDL score may be different. Ask your doctor.

My Action Plan

This week, I will start

examples: exercising more, losing weight, etc.

I will do this by

example: walking 30 minutes before breakfast.



Heart disease risk factors

You can do a lot of things to lower your risk for heart disease. But there are some heart disease risk factors you **can't** change:

- Being a man over 45
- Being a woman over 55
- Having a family history of heart disease (Your father or brother had heart disease before age 55. Or your mother or sister had heart disease before age 65.)
- Having type 2 diabetes

But you **can** change your blood cholesterol.

Remember:

1. Get regular exercise.
2. Lose weight if you need to.
3. Eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
4. Eat less saturated fat and trans fat.

Source: American Heart Association



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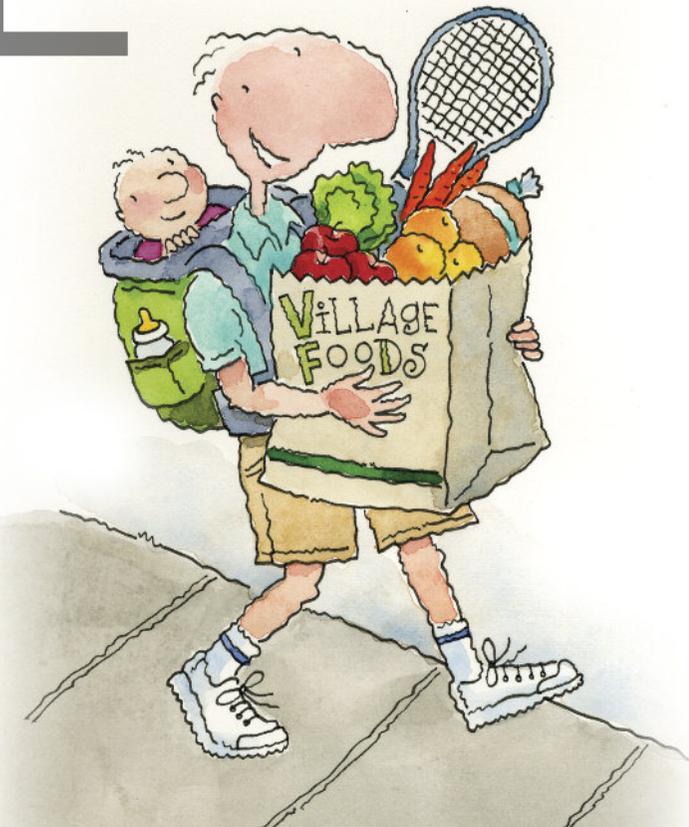
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A QuickRead® Brochure Watching Your Cholesterol



Understanding Cholesterol

Too much cholesterol can cause heart disease. Heart disease is the number one killer of men and women in the U.S.

What cholesterol does

Your body needs cholesterol (*kub-LES-tub-rall*). It helps keep cells healthy. It also helps make hormones, vitamin D, and some acids that break down fat.

But you only need a little cholesterol. Most people get too much. The extra cholesterol goes into your blood and builds up inside your arteries. (Arteries are tubes that carry blood through your body). The buildup is called plaque (plack).

Where extra cholesterol comes from

The amount of cholesterol in your blood depends on many things. Some people's bodies just make too much "bad" cholesterol and too little "good" cholesterol. But exercise and what you eat make a difference, too.

What you can do

- **Live a healthy life.** See "Six Ways to Control Cholesterol" (below) for tips.
- **Know your cholesterol numbers.** There are no signs or symptoms of high cholesterol. So get a complete blood test at least every 5 years starting at age 20. Get checked more often if your doctor says you should.
- **Talk to your doctor.** Your doctor may have ideas to help you. These may include taking medicine to control your cholesterol.

What your blood test means

Your **total cholesterol** number tells you how much cholesterol is in your blood. A complete blood test will also tell you 3 other numbers:

- **LDL**, the "bad" cholesterol
- **HDL**, the "good" cholesterol
- **Triglycerides** (*try-GLIS-uh-rydz*)

LDL: The "bad" cholesterol

LDL carries cholesterol to where it's needed in the body. But too much LDL can lead to heart disease. So you want your **LDL number** to be low.

HDL: The "good" cholesterol

HDL travels through your blood, picking up extra cholesterol. HDL even pulls plaque from your artery walls. Your liver then gets rid of the extra. You want your HDL number to be high.

Triglycerides

These are fats in the blood. The lower this number is, the better for you.

Sources: American Heart Association; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute



6 Ways to Control Cholesterol

1 **Get moving!** Exercise can raise HDL and lower LDL, especially if you are overweight. Try to do at least 30 minutes of exercise every day. Walking is a great way to start.

2 **Eat just enough** calories to reach or keep a healthy weight. Calorie counts are listed on food labels. Visit www.choosemyplate.gov to learn how many calories you need each day.

3 **Eat less saturated fats** and trans fats. Saturated fats are in meat, butter, cheese, palm oil, and coconut oil. Trans fats are in any foods with "hydrogenated" or "partially hydrogenated" vegetable oils.

4 **Use heart-healthy fats** such as olive or canola oil. "Sterol-enriched" spreads are also good.

5 **Eat more fruits,** vegetables, and whole grains.

6 **Don't smoke.** Stay away from other people's smoke.

