

cholesterol



WHAT IS CHOLESTEROL?

Cholesterol is a soft, fat-like, waxy substance found in the bloodstream and in all your body's cells. It's normal to have cholesterol. Cholesterol is an important part of a healthy body because it's used for producing cell membranes and some hormones, and serves other needed bodily functions. But too much cholesterol in the blood is a major risk for coronary heart disease (which leads to heart attack) and for stroke.

WHERE DOES CHOLESTEROL COME FROM?

Cholesterol comes from two sources: your body and food. Your liver and other cells in your body make about 75 percent of blood cholesterol. The other 25 percent comes from the foods you eat.

Much like fat, cholesterol can be separated by the types that are bad and types that are good for you.

BAD CHOLESTEROL

LDL Cholesterol is also known as the "bad cholesterol." When too much LDL cholesterol is in the blood, it can build up along the walls of the arteries. It is known as bad cholesterol because a high LDL levels can increase your risk for heart disease or strokes.

LDL cholesterol is produced naturally by the body, but many people inherit genes from their mother, father or even grandparents that cause them to make too much. Eating saturated fat, trans fats and dietary cholesterol also increases how much you have. If high blood cholesterol runs in your family, lifestyle modifications may not be enough to help lower your LDL blood

cholesterol. Everyone is different, so work with your doctor to find a treatment plan that's best for you.

GOOD CHOLESTEROL

HDL cholesterol is known as the "good" cholesterol because a high level of it seems to protect against heart attack. HDL carries cholesterol away from the arteries and through the liver where it is passed from the body.

To lower high cholesterol levels, eat less than 30% of the total daily calories from fat. Of that 30%, less than one-third should be from saturated fat and not more than one-third should be from polyunsaturated fat. At least one-third of the total fat calories should be from monounsaturated fat. Less than 300 milligrams (mg) of dietary cholesterol per day should be consumed.

HOW TO INCREASE LEVELS OF HDL CHOLESTEROL

- Aerobic exercise
- Stop smoking
- Cut out trans fatty acids like donuts, cookies, fried foods
- Increase the monounsaturated fats such as olive oil and canola oil
- Eat more soluble fiber

HOW TO DECREASE LEVELS OF LDL CHOLESTEROL

- Exercise
- Eat leaner meats such as fish, chicken without skin
- Eat fresh fruits and vegetables
- Increase the consumption of whole wheat and grains
- Cut out trans fatty acids like donuts, cookies, and fried foods
- Increase the monounsaturated fats such as olive oil and canola oil

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