

Cholesterol

September - Cholesterol Education Month

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What is Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a fat-like material in your blood. Your body makes its own cholesterol. When you eat foods that have lots of fat or cholesterol you can have too much cholesterol in your blood.

Cholesterol can build up on the inside of the blood vessels. If too much cholesterol builds up, then the blood cannot flow through to your heart. This can cause a heart attack.

Good vs. Bad Cholesterol

Not all cholesterol in your blood is bad for you. There are three kinds of blood cholesterol that you should know:

Good Cholesterol	Bad Cholesterol
Good cholesterol is called HDL	Bad cholesterol is called LDL
Helps to keep the arteries from clogging up	Causes the build up in the arteries and may cause blockages
Protects against heart disease	Causes heart disease
Good level = 60mg/dL or more	Good level = under 100mg/dL

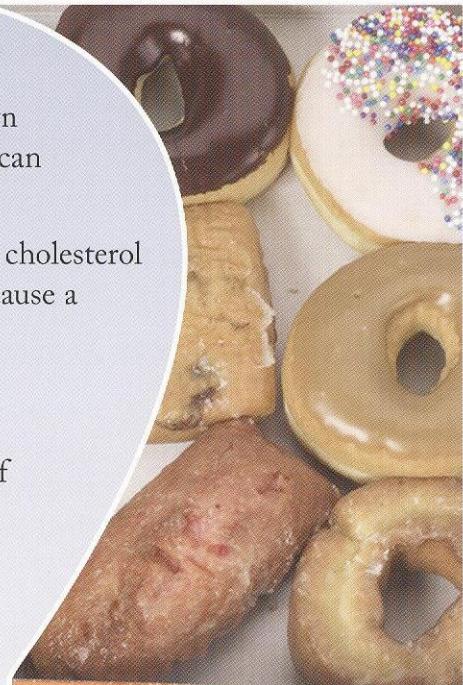
Triglycerides are another form of fat in your blood. They can also raise your risk for heart disease. Levels that are borderline high (150-199 mg/dL) or high (200 mg/dL or more) may need treatment.

What are the warning signs of high blood cholesterol?

- Most people do not have any signs.
- Sometimes cholesterol can build up in the blood vessels of your heart and cause chest pains.

How Do You Find Out If You Have High Cholesterol?

- Go to the doctor and ask for a cholesterol test. The test will let you know how much good and bad cholesterol you have.
- The doctor will tell you the number for your total cholesterol level.
- Your total cholesterol number should be under 200.



DID YOU KNOW...?

Women over the age of 55 tend to have higher cholesterol levels than men.

High cholesterol can increase your chance of having heart disease.

WARNING SIGNS:

Build up in the blood vessels of the heart can cause chest pains.

Most people do not have warning signs.

QUICK FACTS:

Cholesterol can cause heart attacks.

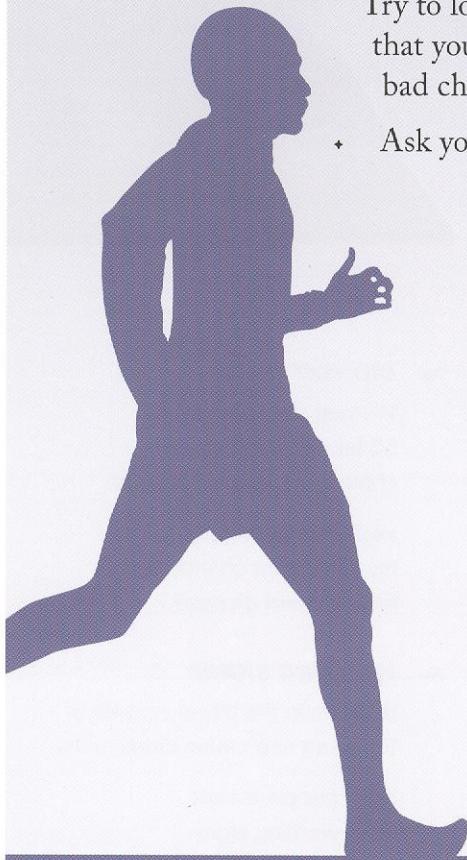
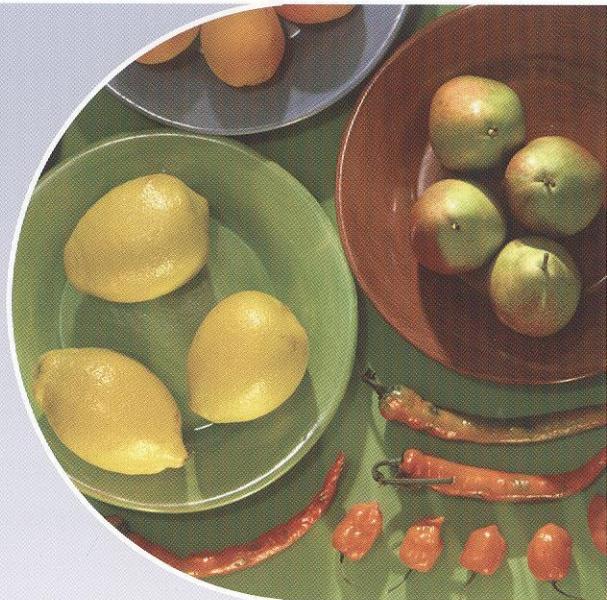
Your total cholesterol number should be less than 200

Watch what you eat and exercise can reduce cholesterol.

What can you do?

There are things you can do to lower your cholesterol:

- Cut back on foods with lots of fat such as fatty meats, fried foods, whole milk, fatty cheeses, butter, margarine, oils, lard, and creams.
- Cut back on food with lots of cholesterol, such as egg yolks and whole eggs.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Cut back on fatty snacks and desserts, such as candy, cookies, doughnuts, muffins, pastries and pies.
- Exercise at least 30 minutes most days.
 - If you are overweight, try to lose weight.
Try to lose weight by cutting back on the amount that you eat. Even a small amount of weight loss can help lower your bad cholesterol, and you will also help your health in other ways.
 - Ask your doctor if you need to take medicine to help lower your cholesterol.



To Learn More...

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Health Information Center

Phone: 301-592-8573

Web: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/infoctr/index.htm

The National Women's Health Information Center

Phone: 1-800-994-WOMAN (1-800-994-9662)

1-888-220-5446 for the hearing impaired

Web: www.4women.gov/faq/cholesterol.htm

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