

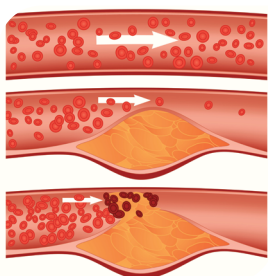
What is Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a fat that comes from two sources—blood cholesterol that is made by your body in the liver and dietary cholesterol that comes from the food you eat. Your body makes all of the cholesterol it needs, and it uses this cholesterol to do important jobs like building cells and making vitamin D and some hormones. You don't need to get cholesterol from the foods you eat. Dietary cholesterol is found in animal foods like meats, seafood, poultry, eggs, and dairy products. These foods are also high in saturated fats and trans fat which can cause the liver to make too much cholesterol. If there is too much cholesterol in the body, the blood vessels can get clogged which can lead to heart disease, heart attacks and strokes.

There are good and bad types of cholesterol.

“Good” (HDL) Cholesterol

Good cholesterol is also called HDL. You need **good cholesterol** to keep your body working right. Good cholesterol also takes bad cholesterol out of the body.



“Bad” (LDL) Cholesterol

Bad cholesterol is also called LDL. It can clog the tubes that carry blood through your body. This can cause heart disease or heart attacks.

Triglycerides

Triglycerides are another kind of fat found in your blood. If your triglyceride level is too high, your chances of having a heart attack or stroke will go up.

What Should My Cholesterol Be?

You should not let your good cholesterol get too low. You should not let your bad cholesterol get too high. Keeping them both under control can help you live a healthier life and avoid many kinds of illnesses.

“Good” (HDL) Cholesterol	40 or more (men) 50 or more (women)
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“Bad” (LDL) Cholesterol	100 or less
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Triglycerides	150 or less
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Ways to Keep Healthy Cholesterol Levels

Here are some ways you can keep your cholesterol levels normal:

- Stop smoking
- Lose weight
- Exercise for 30 minutes 5 days per week. Talk to your doctor before you start exercising.
- Eat low fat foods like fruit, vegetables, low fat milk and cheese and whole grains like oatmeal.
- Take cholesterol medicine if your doctor orders it.

Some types of health problems can raise your chances for heart disease. If you have high blood pressure or diabetes, talk to your doctor about other ways to lower your chances.

Check Your Cholesterol and Live Healthier!

Keeping your cholesterol levels normal is an important part of living a healthy life. See your doctor at least once a year to have your cholesterol checked. If you have a history of high cholesterol or if you take medicine for it, you will need to be checked more often. Follow your doctor's orders.

Want to learn more?

If you want to learn more about controlling your cholesterol, call us at **1-800-578-0603 (TTY: 711)**. We're here to help!

Source: www.heart.org/cholesterol, www.cdc.gov/cholesterol

