

Cholesterol:

the heart of the matter

Cheese omelets call out your name. Chocolate éclairs sing to you from the bakery aisle. How can one resist? The answer may just start with the word “cholesterol.” Reducing your intake of this substance is a great way to help protect your heart and your health!

What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a type of fat in your blood. Your cells need it, and your body supplies it. But you also get cholesterol from the food you eat.

If you have too much cholesterol, it starts to build up in your blood vessels. This can narrow the vessels and reduce the flow of blood. It can also lead to heart attacks and strokes.

2 kinds of cholesterol

- LDL is the “bad” cholesterol. It can raise your risk of heart disease, heart attack, and stroke
- HDL is the “good” cholesterol. It is linked to a lower risk of heart disease, heart attack, and stroke



Lowering your cholesterol is a great way to protect your heart and your health!

What affects cholesterol levels?

The foods you eat. Eating too much saturated fat and trans fat can raise your cholesterol

Being overweight. This may lower HDL (“good”) cholesterol

Being inactive. Not exercising may lower HDL (“good”) cholesterol

Age. Cholesterol starts to rise after age 20

Family history. If family members have or had high cholesterol, you may also have it

See other side for helpful tips on lowering your cholesterol

Stay heart healthy by lowering your cholesterol

You might want to try some of these tips and **see what a difference they can make**

Try to eat a heart-healthy diet

that is rich in fruits, veggies, and whole grains. Other good choices are fish and low-fat or non-fat dairy foods



Be active

on most, if not all, days of the week



Lose a few pounds

if you need to, and try to stay at a healthy weight



Take a statin medicine

Statin can help if you are at a high risk of a heart attack or stroke



Give up smoking

It's one of the best things you can do for your heart



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